



National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT)

Past & Future

A Decade of Stakeholder Advice

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Executive Summary

Abstract of Study

The National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) was established in 1988 to provide advice to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on issues related to environmental management and policy. NACEPT provides a forum for public discussion and the development of independent advice and counsel by taking advantage of the respective experiences, strengths, knowledge, and responsibilities of a broad range of Agency constituents and stakeholders. Since 1988, the Council has convened and directed the work of 26 standing committees, each established to address a specific issue. Over the last decade, these standing committees, comprised of over 700 stakeholder representatives, have addressed Agency issues related to information management, program activities, and general management and policy. The Council, in turn, has approved and published over 50 major reports containing over 1,000 recommendations to the EPA Administrator. In recognition of the 10-year anniversary of NACEPT, the Council undertook a study to evaluate its past performance and to chart a course for its future by identifying ways to better serve the Agency.

This study found that NACEPT has undoubtedly been a success. NACEPT's standing committees have produced hundreds of timely and relevant recommendations responding to requests made by the EPA Administrator. Many of these recommendations have influenced or been directly responsible for subsequent EPA decisions and actions. In addition, the volume and range of topics addressed by NACEPT has increased during this time, reflecting the value placed on the Council by EPA's leadership.

This report, entitled *NACEPT: Past and Future*, presents the results of this study. Other key findings of the study are:

- ▶ NACEPT recommendations have had significant impacts on Agency decision-making as demonstrated by the creation of new programs such as the U.S. Environmental Training Institute, the establishment of new Agency offices such as the Technology Innovation Office, and incorporation into formal Agency policy such as the EPA's IRM Strategic Plan.
- ▶ NACEPT's recommendations have fulfilled the requests for advice made to Council by the EPA Administrator.
- ▶ Membership on NACEPT is balanced and representative of diverse points of view. Feedback to standing committees on the impact of their recommendations and their implementation has been limited.
- ▶ Standing committees have adequate direction, support, and resources to complete their work although enhancements in communication and facilitation support are desirable.

Based on these findings, NACEPT has undertaken several strategic planning initiatives including the development of a strategic action plan, which identified future and emerging issues relevant to environmental decision-making. In addition, this report includes recommendations related to NACEPT's operations, its standing committees, and EPA's Office of Cooperative Environmental Management, which provides management and administrative support to the Council. These recommendations range from implementing a structured evaluation of each standing committee on completion of its work to requesting a formal response from the Agency to all standing committee reports. The full list of study findings and recommendations is presented in the following Exhibits ES-1 and ES-2.

Exhibit ES-1.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

1. NACEPT provides valuable input and advice to the Agency from a wide variety of stakeholders.
2. Recommendations are timely for Agency decision-making and fulfill standing committee charters.
3. Standing committee membership is a balanced representation of points of view.
4. Standing committees are given adequate direction to fulfill their missions; early agreement on purpose and goals may help to improve efficiency.
5. Standing committee recommendations are developed in a timely, inclusive fashion.
6. Most respondents have not received feedback from the Agency on the impact of their standing committee's recommendations.
7. Communication between standing committee members is adequate but improvements are needed for communications between meetings and to the Council.
8. Standing committee meetings are generally well-planned and structured yet improvements can be made in defining the consensus process, ensuring equitable participation, and keeping decisions on track.
9. Standing committee members were generally positive about receiving timely and useful background and technical materials to make informed decisions.
10. More frequent meetings and improved communication between meetings could improve standing committee effectiveness.
11. Better meeting support can be achieved through increased use of technology and facilitation.

Exhibit ES-2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The NACEPT Council should:

- Do more strategic planning to identify the policy issues which NACEPT standing committees address.
- Better publicize itself and its work to all parts of the Agency and beyond.
- Streamline the process of developing and delivering recommendations.
- Conduct an evaluation of standing committee processes upon the completion of the standing committee's work.
- Take responsibility for maintaining contact with its past members.

NACEPT Standing Committees should:

- Prioritize their recommendations and include suggested schedules and performance targets for implementation of each recommendation.
- Request a formal response from the Agency to all standing committee reports at an appropriate interval.

The Office of Cooperative Environmental Management should:

- Ensure productive interaction directly between NACEPT standing committees and relevant Agency program offices.
- Ensure that standing committee work is adequately planned and managed by the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) and standing committee chairperson to achieve committee goals in an efficient manner.
- Make clear to the program offices the qualifications needed to be a DFO and provide training to appointed DFOs.
- Develop better ways for NACEPT members to communicate between meetings.
- Establish an enhanced formal method for the establishment of standing committees.
- Improve the NACEPT and standing committee orientation process for new members.
- Develop a formal facilitation program to ensure proper support for each standing committee.

Summary of Report

Overview of NACEPT

In 1988, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) founded the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) [previously known as the National Advisory Council for Environmental Technology Transfer (NACETT)]. NACEPT was established to provide an ongoing stakeholder advisory group to recommend ways the Agency could encourage technology transfer through cooperative activities with industry, academia, and non-federal government agencies.

In its first decade of operation, NACEPT has involved over 700 stakeholder representatives from a variety of sectors including business and industry, state, local, and tribal governments, and academia, who have participated in 26 standing committees in addition to the Council. Each standing committee is established to address a specific charge within a set timeframe. As such, the Council serves as a steering committee, reviewing and approving the reports and recommendations of the standing committees.

The number of NACEPT standing committee investigations has increased over the past decade as NACEPT has increased the scope of issues on which it provides the Agency advice, as shown in the Exhibit ES-3 below. These committees, identified in Exhibit ES-4, have held hundreds of open meetings in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), produced over 50 major, published reports, and put forth over 1,000 recommendations related to information management, program activities, and general Agency policies.

Exhibit ES-3. Number of Standing Committees by Topic Area

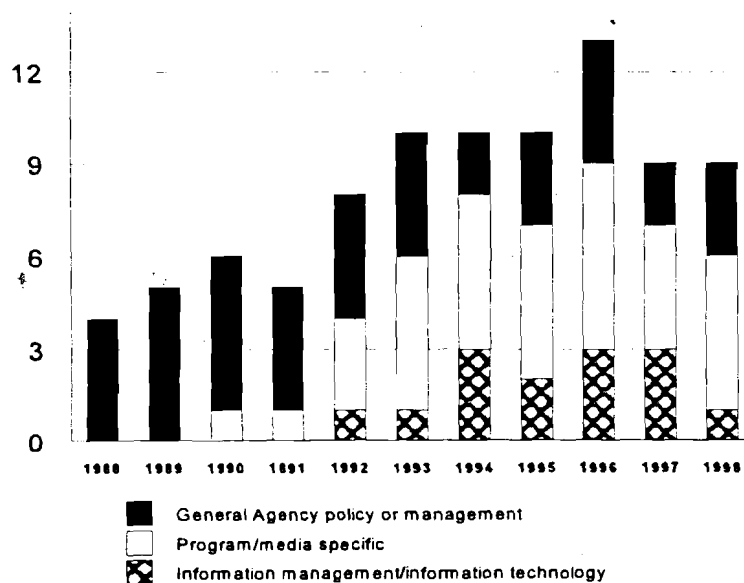
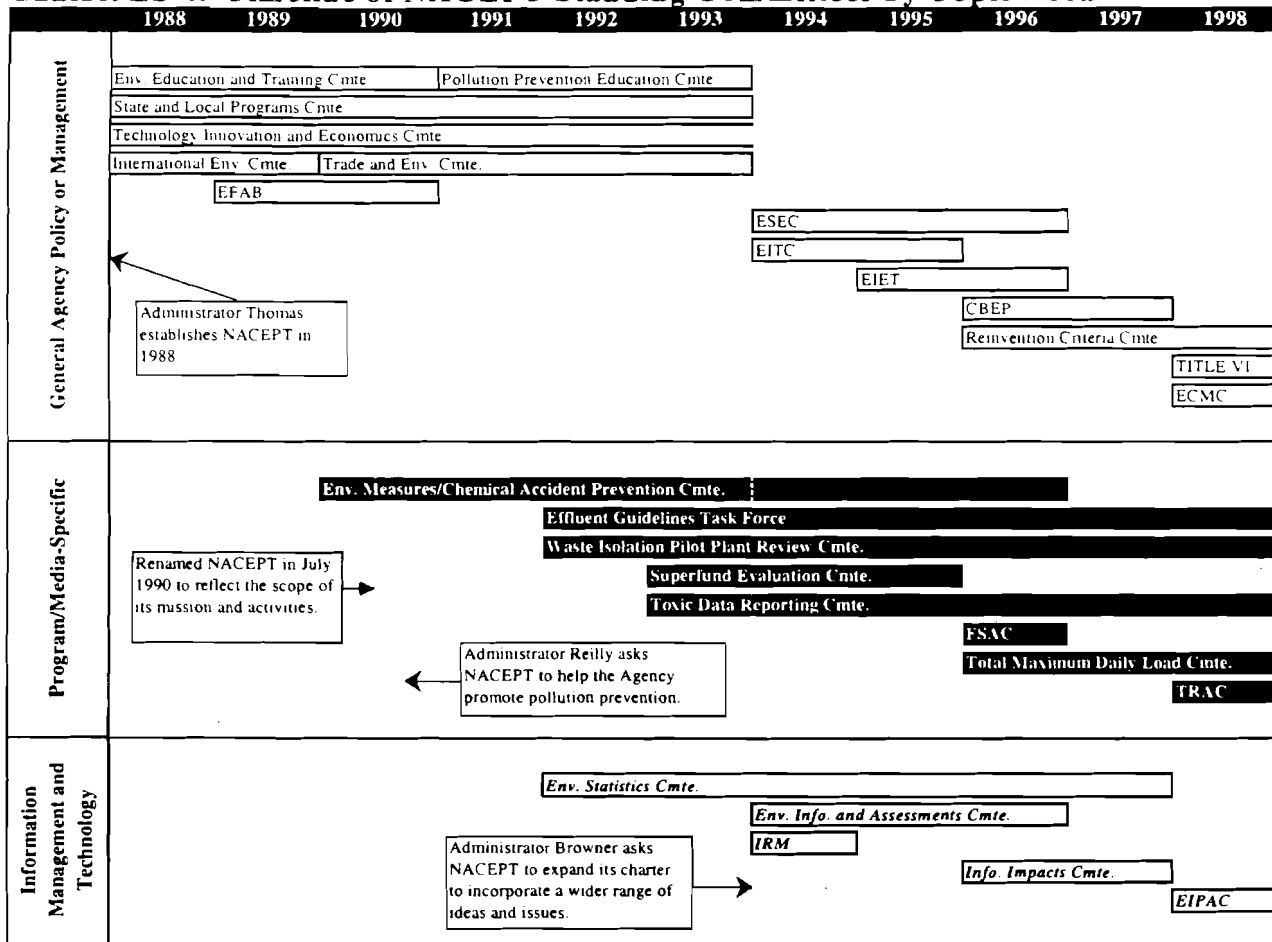


Exhibit ES-4. Timeline of NACEPT Standing Committees by Topic Area



Note: Appendix A: NACEPT Standing Committee Acronyms presents the full name and dates of operation for each committee.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study was to assess NACEPT's effectiveness and impact over its first decade of operations and to develop recommendations to enhance its value in the future. The study examined NACEPT organizational processes, products, and impacts to assess both the efficiency and effectiveness of NACEPT and its standing committees from the perspectives of those serving on the Council and EPA officials who are the Council's clients. The study also examined the interaction between the Council and its standing committees and between the Council and EPA, especially the Office of Cooperative Environmental Management (OCEM) which supports the Council on behalf of the Administrator.

The study was conducted in three stages of data collection, involving: (1) extensive review of NACEPT and OCEM records and external data sources; (2) a written survey targeting all past

and current NACEPT members; and (3) detailed one-on-one interviews with a selected sample of NACEPT members and EPA officials. Additional details on the study methodology are included Appendices F, G, H, I, K, and L.

Principal Findings

Several tests of effectiveness were used in this study to assess NACEPT's impact, including the extent to which the Council and its standing committees had:

- ▶ fulfilled their charges;
- ▶ brought new, outside perspectives to EPA;
- ▶ provided timely and relevant advice and recommendations; and
- ▶ influenced the outcome of Agency policy decisions and/or course of program activities.

By all of these standards, NACEPT has been a success. Principal findings of the study are summarized in Exhibit ES-1 on page ES-2.

Through its standing committees, NACEPT has produced over 1,000 recommendations presented in over 50 major reports. In addition to informal advice, counsel, and insight were provided directly to EPA officials in the course of NACEPT meetings. Both NACEPT members and Agency officials interviewed attest to the new perspectives that NACEPT has brought to issues put before it and to the quality and timeliness of its recommendations on these issues. By a significant margin, past and current NACEPT members valued their service on NACEPT and rated their standing committee's work as valuable to EPA. For example,

- ▶ Survey respondents were very positive about the value of the NACEPT process and the advice NACEPT provides EPA decision-makers.
- ▶ Respondents particularly value the diversity of perspectives captured within the NACEPT process.
- ▶ Over three-quarters of respondents indicated that they would serve on NACEPT again if asked.¹

Agency officials echoed these views and, as shown in Exhibit ES-5, there is an extensive list of Agency decisions and actions that can be traced back to recommendations made by NACEPT. This list, which is only a partial list of NACEPT's impact, indicates the considerable influence of NACEPT on Agency policies and actions over the last decade.

¹ NACEPT members volunteer their expertise and time and are not compensated although travel costs are reimbursed.

Exhibit ES-5. Impacts of NACEPT by Topic Area

| INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY | |
|--|--|
| <i>Standing Committees</i> | <i>Impacts on EPA Policy</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Environmental Information and Assessments Committee ◆ Environmental Statistics Committee ◆ Information Resources Management Strategic Planning Task Force ◆ Environmental Information and Public Access Committee ◆ Information Impacts Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ OIRM management incorporated NACEPT recommendation into the Agency's Strategic Management Plan. ◆ EPA launched the Facility Identification Initiative to streamline access and reporting by establishing a uniform set of facility identification data. ◆ EPA's IRM Strategic Plan incorporated much of the language contained in the IRM Task Force recommendations. ◆ Consistent with NACEPT advice, the Agency has created a Chief Information Officer to oversee the Agency's information management. ◆ Advice of the Information Impacts Committee was cited in a June 1998 Agency audit of the Office of Water's Data Integration Efforts. ◆ Recommendations of the Environmental Information and Assessment Committee influenced the Agency's Office of Research and Development's management strategy for scientific data. ◆ EPA established a Center for Environmental Information and Statistics as recommended by the Environmental Statistics Committee. |
| PROGRAM/MEDIA SPECIFIC POLICY | |
| <i>Standing Committees</i> | <i>Impacts on EPA Policy</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Environmental Measures/Chemical Accident Prevention Committee ◆ Superfund Evaluation Committee ◆ Food Safety Advisory Committee ◆ Total Maximum Daily Load Committee ◆ Effluent Guidelines Task Force ◆ Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Review Committee ◆ Toxic Data Reporting Committee ◆ Tolerance Reassessment Advisory Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The advice of EMCAP has been used in the measurement process in the Agency's pollution prevention program. ◆ EPA's Superfund Administrative Reforms adopted many of the concepts embodied in the SEC's recommendations. ◆ The Integrative Environmental Justice Model Demonstration Approach developed by SEC was incorporated into the <u>OSWER Environmental Justice Action Agenda</u> developed by the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC). ◆ EGTF recommendations have led to limitations on the use of synthetic-based drilling fluids, an examination of rules addressing coal mining operations, and revisions to the feedlot category as well as a commitment from the Agency to write regulations for dams. ◆ EPA now recommends that states publish their methodology for TMDL listings and establish related data quality assurance measures. ◆ The Agency has incorporated earlier stakeholder participation in the development of specific Effluent Guideline Rules. ◆ EPA has used approaches developed by FSAC to make FQPA regulatory decisions. ◆ EPA is currently utilizing the framework developed by TRAC to investigate science policy areas related to FQPA and tolerance reassessment. |

| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Input from the TDR committee has led to revisions to Form A reporting requirements and resulting procedures. ◆ NACEPT advice was incorporated into the Agency's compliance criteria for WIPP. ◆ EPA now recommends the establishment of community groups to increase public involvement in the remediation of radiation contaminated sites. |
|---|---|
| GENERAL AGENCY/ POLICY/MANAGEMENT | |
| <i>Standing Committees</i> | <i>Impacts on EPA Policy</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Environmental Education and Training Committee ◆ Pollution Prevention Education Committee ◆ State and Local Programs Committee ◆ Technology Innovation and Economics Committee ◆ Trade and Environment Committee ◆ International Environmental Committee ◆ Environmental Financial Advisory Board ◆ Ecosystems Sustainable Economies Committee ◆ Ecosystems Implementation Tools Committee ◆ Environmental Information, Economics, and Technology ◆ Community Based Environmental Protection Committee ◆ Reinvention Criteria Committee ◆ Environmental Capital Markets Committee ◆ Title VI Implementation Advisory Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ EPA developed of a guidebook to help develop more sustainable economic systems. ◆ EPA created of a new U.S. Environmental Training Institute. ◆ EPA formed of EPA's Office of Environmental Education. ◆ EPA created of non-profit organizations addressing environmental education and needs of industry. ◆ EPA improved delivery of environmental information to college students and young adults. ◆ EPA established of a Technology Innovation Office (TIO) to facilitate the transfer of technologies developed in the Superfund Innovative Technology Evaluation program. ◆ EPA has addressed "environmental education" in a proactive manner. ◆ EPA developed programs which focus on educating businesses on how to implement environmental programs. ◆ EPA developed EnviroSenSe, an electronic library of information on pollution prevention, technical assistance, and environmental compliance. ◆ The Agency has supported of projects to build state and local capacity for risk-based planning. ◆ EPA established of a the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee by the Office of Air and Radiation. ◆ EPA implemented of comparative risk and strategic planning in EPA Regions. ◆ EPA increased cooperative agreements. ◆ EPA increased use of performance evaluation based on outcomes. ◆ EPA conducted pre-congressional consultations on the Agency's GPRA plan. ◆ EPA incorporated technology incentives into the Agency's pollution prevention strategy. ◆ EPA developed techniques for ecosystem valuation. ◆ EPA developed final guidance for implementation of the data elements required by the Pollution Prevention Act. |

At the same time, although largely satisfied with the process, many past and current NACEPT members recommended improvements in certain aspects of NACEPT and standing committee operations. Most importantly, few NACEPT members indicated knowing what EPA had done with their standing committee's recommendations, which impedes the Council's ability to provide continuing advice and counsel on that topic. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of respondents did not know whether the Agency had taken actions as a result of the standing committee's advice. The other principal findings are as follows:

- ▶ While adequate direction is given to guide the work of a standing committee, an initial agreement between the standing committee and relevant Agency offices on the specific purpose and goals of the standing committee would improve efficiency of the standing committee's work.
- ▶ Standing committees would benefit from more support (e.g., background materials) on technical issues. In addition, in the case of a few standing committees, respondents stated that agendas and meeting materials were not distributed in a timely way.
- ▶ The efficiency of standing committee work could be improved by more frequent meetings of the committee and improved communication between meetings to allow the committee to advance its work between meetings.
- ▶ Better meeting management is often needed. Specifically, clear and agreed on processes for reaching consensus need to be identified, equitable participation must be ensured, and facilitation is needed to keep discussions on-track.
- ▶ Deliberations could be improved by having technical advisors on hand at all meetings as well as better clerical support and equipment for real-time collaborative group work (e.g., laptop computers to draft recommendations).
- ▶ While communication is effective between standing committee members, communication between the Council and standing committees is limited.

Recommendations

Based on the findings summarized above and described in greater detail in the remainder of this report, recommendations were developed in three areas related to: (1) Council operations; (2) standing committee activities; and (3) OCEM support. These recommendations are presented in Exhibit ES-2 on page ES-3 and described briefly below.

Recommendations for improving the NACEPT Council

- ▶ NACEPT should engage in a strategic planning effort to identify pressing or emerging policy issues which standing committees might address. The results of these efforts should be transmitted to the EPA Administrator on an annual basis.

- ▶ NACEPT should streamline the recommendation review process to ensure that the advice of standing committees is approved by the Council and transmitted to the Agency in a timely fashion.
- ▶ NACEPT should conduct post-committee evaluations. Such evaluations would be led by the standing committee chairperson and DFO and would attempt to identify which aspects of the process worked well and where improvement or change is needed.
- ▶ NACEPT should better publicize itself and its work to all parts of the Agency and to external audiences.
- ▶ NACEPT should make a concerted effort to maintain contact with its past members. This contact should include communication regarding the actions which have been taken by the Agency as the result of NACEPT's advice.
- ▶ For cases in which the Agency has committed to implement NACEPT recommendations, NACEPT should request formal updates on the status of implementation of those recommendations.

Recommendations for improving the NACEPT Standing Committees

- ▶ Standing committees should be encouraged to prioritize their recommendations and include, where appropriate, implementation schedules and milestones for each recommendation.
- ▶ Standing committees should request that the Agency provide a formal response to NACEPT on the Agency's disposition toward standing committee recommendations at a mutually acceptable interval. (For most standing committees, the schedule of 60 days after transmittal seems reasonable.)

Recommendations for OCEM's management of NACEPT

- ▶ OCEM should maximize direct interaction between standing committees and Agency program offices. This could be accomplished by establishing a program office-standing committee liaison. Such a liaison would be encouraged to attend standing committee meetings, contribute to the development of agendas and background materials, and serve as the key intermediary on technical issues.
- ▶ OCEM should ensure that standing committee work is adequately planned and managed by the Designated Federal Official (DFO) and chairperson to achieve the standing committee goals in an efficient manner. Such planning would include the initial development of clear objectives and timelines to guide the investigation, as well as milestones and performance objectives by which to assess progress.
- ▶ OCEM should develop and implement a formal facilitation program to ensure proper support for each standing committee.

- OCEM should develop better ways for standing committee members to communicate between meetings. Options provided by the Internet and telecommunication systems should be considered.
- OCEM should review and enhance the method by which new standing committees are established. Specifically, better definition of the purpose and a more rigorous membership selection process are needed.
- OCEM should improve the orientation process for new members. Improvements could include enhanced focus on past NACEPT work to provide committee-specific background, as well as the development of new ways to provide training on FACA guidelines such as online tutorials or a brief video.

Conclusion

Over its first decade, NACEPT has addressed an extensive and varied set of issues at the request of the EPA Administrator and provided valuable recommendations, advice, and counsel on these issues and topics. Equally important, NACEPT's recommendations have had a significant and lasting impact on the Agency's decision making, policies, and program activities. These impacts attest to the value of the expertise and perspectives that NACEPT is able to bring to an issue. In addition, the usefulness of NACEPT to the Agency is demonstrated by the number of standing committees and range of issues addressed by NACEPT at the Administrator's request in the last decade.

NACEPT has demonstrated that it is EPA's most unique federal advisory committee. This study has identified NACEPT as having developed a niche for providing valuable advice on broad, cross-media issues. At the same time, NACEPT has displayed the flexibility to address specific programmatic issues that are of a high priority or urgent in nature. This flexibility has enabled NACEPT to be responsive to EPA, even as issues and priorities change.

At present, NACEPT is taking the strategic initiative to reinvent itself, thereby increasing its value to EPA. Evidence of this includes this study, the creation of the NACEPT Council's strategic plan, customer focus and partnering, and improved processes. NACEPT's future is filled with possibilities and promise, based on the past 10 years' exemplary record of service to EPA and the citizens of the United States.

NACEPT is indebted to Nancy Tosta, Gerard Bulanowski, Bill Sonntag, Tom Davis, and Patricia Bauman who, as the members of the Study team, directed this study and developed its findings and recommendations. Their insights, efforts, and enthusiasm were instrumental to the success of this study.

Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study, based on both the completed written surveys and the interviews with NACEPT members and Agency officials. These findings address all aspects of NACEPT's operations, effectiveness, and impact as described in greater detail in Appendix F, *Overview of the Study Methodology*.

The findings presented in this chapter are based on 198 completed surveys and 37 interviews. The response rate on the written survey of past and current NACEPT members was 34%, which is good for a survey of this type. For more complete survey results, see Appendix J. Twenty-two of the follow-up interviews were conducted with NACEPT members, and the other 15 were with Agency officials. In general, there was noticeable agreement between the NACEPT members and Agency officials as to the strengths of NACEPT and areas for improvement.

Overall, NACEPT and its standing committees were found to have fulfilled their charges, brought new, outside perspectives to EPA, provided timely and relevant advice and recommendations to the Agency, and influenced the outcome of Agency decisions, policies, and program activities. At the same time, opportunities for improvements were noted in certain aspects of meeting management and support, communications, and feedback to NACEPT on the impact and use of its advice and recommendations. The principal findings of the study are presented below in order of importance.

Principal Findings

Overall assessment of NACEPT. *NACEPT provides valuable input and advice to the Agency from a wide variety of stakeholders.*

Respondents were very positive about the NACEPT process as a whole. Seventy-six percent agreed that NACEPT provides EPA decision-makers with valuable input from a broad range of interested parties, and 77% agreed that they would serve on a NACEPT committee again if asked. Further, respondents regarded the NACEPT process as an effective means for the Agency to get advice (77% agree), a way to gather valuable input from a broad range of interested parties (76% agree), and helpful to the Agency in identifying and addressing key issues in a timely manner (63% agree).⁶ On the value of their participation and NACEPT in general, comments include:

- ▶ As an independent advocate, NACEPT committees can serve as “the corporate memory” for the Agency between political administrations and can help to keep important initiatives on-track.
- ▶ Standing committees discuss stakeholder views of important issues in a structured and timely way.

- ▶ NACEPT brings people in from around the country to share their expertise and viewpoints with policy-makers, which helps to enhance the Agency's credibility beyond the Beltway.
- ▶ Standing committees provide new perspectives to Agency considerations.
- ▶ Standing committees add significant value as compared to the Federal Register method of commenting on draft regulations since NACEPT provides stakeholder input early in policy development, allowing the Agency to act proactively.

Since 1988, NACEPT has convened 26 standing committees at the request of the Agency to provide stakeholder advice on specific issues. Over 700 stakeholders have served as NACEPT members producing over 50 major reports and 1,000 recommendations to the EPA on a variety of information management, program specific, and policy issues.

Other respondents suggested ways in which NACEPT could improve its service to the Agency:

- ▶ Request that each Agency program office share with NACEPT its top-priority issues for the coming year. This would allow either the program office, or NACEPT, to identify areas in which NACEPT might provide timely and relevant advice.
- ▶ Focus on increasing NACEPT support to Regional offices on relevant issues.
- ▶ Encourage the Agency to establish grant programs to provide the financial support to implement standing committee recommendations.
- ▶ Establish greater visibility within the Agency, including establishing direct lines of communication to the appropriate Agency offices.
- ▶ Reorganize NACEPT around four or five core topics (e.g., Information Resources Management, media-specific issues, Agency management issues) and treat topics in a broader, more integrated, and proactive way.
- ▶ Forge a stronger relationship between NACEPT and EPA's Science Advisory Board.
- ▶ Design and implement an orientation system which includes an explanation of how each standing committee fits into the overall NACEPT process.
- ▶ Allow senior EPA staff to serve as voting or ex-officio standing committee members.
- ▶ Continue its commitment to process improvement by conducting a follow-up study in a few years to determine the effects of this Study.

Impact of advice and reports. *Recommendations are timely for Agency decision-making and fulfill standing committee charters.*

The majority of respondents believed that the standing committees recommendations were timely to the Agency's decision-making process, addressed decision-makers' needs, and introduced new perspectives into the Agency's considerations (54%, 51%, and 57% agreed respectively). These views are supported by the documentary research conducted to develop the standing committee briefing papers as well as by specific written responses on the survey and in the follow-up interviews. These impacts are presented in Exhibit 1 on the following page. Examples cited in survey and interview responses include:

- ▶ As a result of participation at standing committee meetings, Agency staff are more aware of the issues of concern to stakeholders and are thus better prepared to consider the political ramifications and impacts that Agency actions might have.
- ▶ As recommended by the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Committee, EPA now recommends that States develop a methodology for TMDL water listings which includes measures of assurance to the quality of data.
- ▶ As recommended by TMDL, EPA committed to writing regulations for dams.
- ▶ As suggested by the Environmental Education Training Committee/Pollution Prevention Education Committee, EPA has expanded its mission beyond end-of-pipe considerations to include "environmental education" in a proactive manner.
- ▶ The advice of the Emergency Management Chemical Accident Prevention committee has been used directly in the measurement process which EPA has established for its prevention program.
- ▶ As proposed by the Effluent Guidelines Task Force (EGTF), the Agency has revised the effluent guidelines process to incorporate very early stakeholder participation (up to a year earlier than traditionally has been sought) as demonstrated in the development of the Iron/Steel Effluent Guideline Rule. As such, the EGTF has helped to effect culture changes about the role of stakeholder participation in the rulemaking process in both EPA and certain industries.
- ▶ In accord with the advice of the Information Impacts Committee, the Agency has strengthened the role of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) by making the position a focal point of the information management process and establishing a chain of responsibility that leads directly to the CIO.
- ▶ The discussions of the State and Local Committee helped to develop ideas within the Agency which led to the creation of programs to educate businesses on how to implement environmental programs.
- ▶ The State and Local Committee's recommendations contributed to the Agency's implementation of cooperative agreements considering all stakeholders and the increased use of performance evaluation based on outcomes.

Exhibit 1. Impacts of NACEPT by Topic Area

| INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY | |
|--|--|
| <i>Standing Committees</i> | <i>Impacts on EPA Policy</i> |
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| PROGRAM/MEDIA SPECIFIC POLICY | |
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| <i>Standing Committees</i> | <i>Impacts on EPA Policy</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Environmental Measures/Chemical Accident Prevention Committee ◆ Superfund Evaluation Committee ◆ Food Safety Advisory Committee ◆ Total Maximum Daily Load Committee ◆ Effluent Guidelines Task Force ◆ Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Review Committee ◆ Toxic Data Reporting Committee ◆ Tolerance Reassessment Advisory Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The advice of EMCAP has been used in the measurement process in the Agency's pollution prevention program. ◆ EPA's Superfund Administrative Reforms adopted many of the concepts embodied in the SEC's recommendations. ◆ The Integrative Environmental Justice Model Demonstration Approach developed by SEC was incorporated into the <u>OSWER Environmental Justice Action Agenda</u> developed by the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC). ◆ EGTF recommendations have led to limitations on the use of synthetic-based drilling fluids, an examination of rules addressing coal mining operations, and revisions to the feedlot category as well as a commitment from the Agency to write regulations for dams. ◆ EPA now recommends that states publish their methodology for TMDL listings and establish related data quality assurance measures. ◆ The Agency has incorporated earlier stakeholder participation in the development of specific Effluent Guideline Rules. ◆ EPA has used approaches developed by FSAC to make FQPA regulatory decisions. ◆ EPA is currently utilizing the framework developed by TRAC to investigate science policy areas related to FQPA and tolerance reassessment. ◆ Input from the TDR committee has led to revisions to Form A reporting requirements and resulting procedures. ◆ NACEPT advice was incorporated into the Agency's compliance criteria for WIPP. ◆ EPA now recommends the establishment of community groups to increase public involvement in the remediation of radiation contaminated sites. |

| GENERAL AGENCY/ POLICY/MANAGEMENT | |
|---|---|
| <i>Standing Committees</i> | <i>Impacts on EPA Policy</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Environmental Education and Training Committee ◆ Pollution Prevention Education Committee ◆ State and Local Programs Committee ◆ Technology Innovation and Economics Committee ◆ Trade and Environment Committee ◆ International Environmental Committee ◆ Environmental Financial Advisory Board ◆ Ecosystems Sustainable Economies Committee ◆ Ecosystems Implementation Tools Committee ◆ Environmental Information, Economics, and Technology ◆ Community Based Environmental Protection Committee ◆ Reinvention Criteria Committee ◆ Environmental Capital Markets Committee ◆ Title VI Implementation Advisory Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ EPA developed of a guidebook to help develop more sustainable economic systems. ◆ EPA created of a new U.S. Environmental Training Institute. ◆ EPA formed of EPA's Office of Environmental Education. ◆ EPA created of non-profit organizations addressing environmental education and needs of industry. ◆ EPA improved delivery of environmental information to college students and young adults. ◆ EPA established of a Technology Innovation Office (TIO) to facilitate the transfer of technologies developed in the Superfund Innovative Technology Evaluation program. ◆ EPA has addressed "environmental education" in a proactive manner. ◆ EPA developed programs which focus on educating businesses on how to implement environmental programs. ◆ EPA developed Enviro\$en\$e, an electronic library of information on pollution prevention, technical assistance, and environmental compliance. ◆ The Agency has supported of projects to build state and local capacity for risk-based planning. ◆ EPA established of a the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee by the Office of Air and Radiation. ◆ EPA implemented of comparative risk and strategic planning in EPA Regions. ◆ EPA increased cooperative agreements. ◆ EPA increased use of performance evaluation based on outcomes. ◆ EPA conducted pre-congressional consultations on the Agency's GPRA plan. ◆ EPA incorporated technology incentives into the Agency's pollution prevention strategy. ◆ EPA developed techniques for ecosystem valuation. ◆ EPA developed final guidance for implementation of the data elements required by the Pollution Prevention Act. |

Other respondents provided written responses on the survey on the obstacles which may have limited the impact of standing committee recommendations. These include:

- ▶ There is no obligation for the Agency to implement standing committee recommendations since standing committees have no formal authority and most recommendations have no measures of progress for implementation.
- ▶ The standing committee did not have interaction with the appropriate level of Agency staff where the culture changes that were sought by the recommendations needed to occur (i.e., the standing committee's interactions were with staff too senior to affect the day-to-day culture).
- ▶ The standing committee's recommendations were too vague to have an impact because the standing committee's agenda was too large to encourage focus on specific implementation issues.
- ▶ The effectiveness of the standing committee was limited because the Agency was too concerned with defending its current positions. (Other respondents wrote that the Agency perceived the standing committee's function as that of a "rubber stamp".)
- ▶ The standing committee was unable to set its own course because of the undue influence of Agency decision-makers in steering the standing committee's agenda in specific directions.
- ▶ A protocol needs to be established for interaction between standing committees and Agency offices. This should include measures to ensure that Agency representatives have the necessary interpersonal skills to listen to a standing committee and act as an effective liaison during the standing committee's operations.
- ▶ The Council should proactively communicate with the Agency to ensure that the appropriate decision-makers are aware of and have access to the standing committee recommendations relevant to their programs.

Membership. *NACEPT and standing committee membership is a balanced representation of points of view.*

Overall, respondents agreed that standing committee membership was balanced in terms of the points of view represented (76% agree). See Figures 1, 2, and 3 for the Council's composition by sector.

Figure 1. 1992 Council Composition

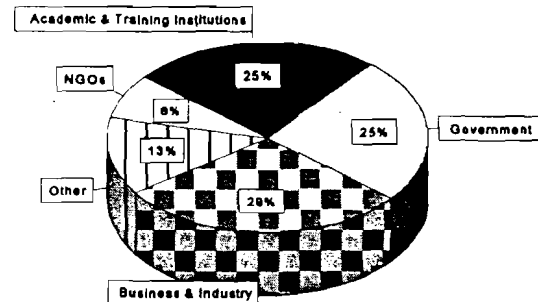


Figure 2. 1995 Council Composition

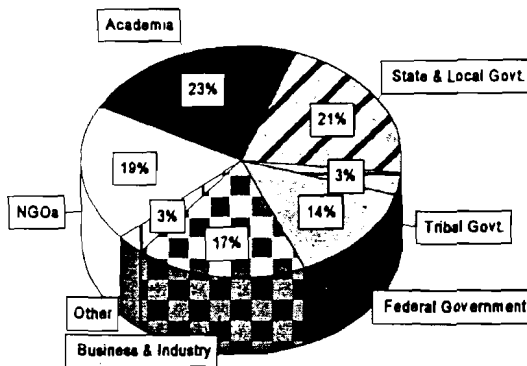
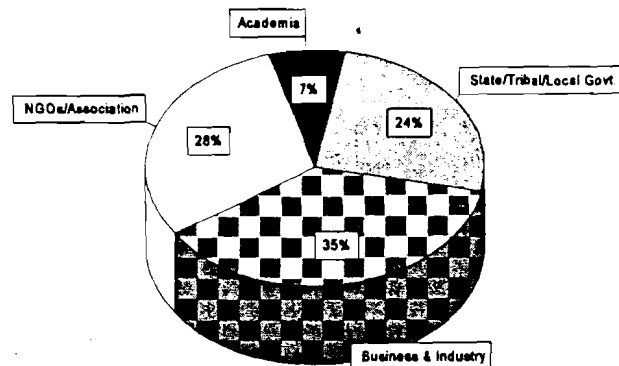


Figure 3. 1999 Council Composition



In narrative comments, many respondents indicated that the exposure to other stakeholders' viewpoints was the greatest benefit to both themselves and the Agency. Nonetheless, some respondents felt that their standing committee could have been more effective had more attention been paid in the membership selection process to:

- ▶ The technical level and experience of members on the topic to be addressed.
- ▶ Recruiting members who were willing to put in the time to prepare for, actively participate in, and work outside the standing committee's meetings.
- ▶ Bringing in, when possible, representatives of organizations who have previously reviewed the topic to be addressed.

- ▶ Seeking out and encouraging participation from individuals “outside the Beltway”.
- ▶ Ensuring that each member is willing to work toward achieving consensus.
- ▶ Limiting standing committee size to encourage full engagement in a true “give and take” process.

For example, the Environmental Capital Markets Committee is charged with identifying practical ways for the financial services industry to include the environmental performance of its clients as an integral part of its core credit, investment, and underwriting processes. One respondent wrote that this was difficult for the committee to do given the limited number of committee members with relevant experience and the lack of participation from the commercial banking and asset management sectors.

ECMC Member

Standing committee mission and purpose. *Standing committees are given adequate direction to fulfill their missions; early agreement on purpose and goals may help to improve efficiency.*

Respondents generally agreed that the standing committee was provided with adequate direction on its purpose and goals (64% agree), that the standing committee understood its purpose (62% agree), and that the standing committee was able to determine its own direction and lines of inquiry (63% agree). However, some respondents saw a lack of a defined purpose which limited efficiency. Specific comments include:

- ▶ The Agency’s expectations for the standing committee should be made as clear as possible. These expectations should include:
 - specific statements of what the standing committee is expected to do;
 - clear goals of what products and advice the Agency would like from the standing committee;
 - an explanation of what the Agency has already done relevant to the topic and how the standing committee’s activities will be integrated with these activities;
 - an explanation of the reasons why recommendations are needed and why the particular standing committee membership has been selected;
 - guidelines for limitations to the standing committee’s deliberations including what types of data the Agency will accept; and
 - identification of the key issues and priorities on which the standing committee should focus its resources and activities.

The Agency had already conducted a significant amount of analysis and assessment of options for streamlining the Effluent Guidelines process. As a result, the Task Force wasn't sure what its job was since EPA had left few loose ends.

EGTF Member

Some respondents advocated a more interactive development of the standing committee's charge by the Agency and the standing committee. Specific suggestions include:

- ▶ what the standing committee's work products should look like;
- ▶ what would be a reasonable timetable for the production of work products and Agency feedback; and
- ▶ what the feedback from the Agency to the standing committee should be.

Such negotiations would allow a reasonable degree of involvement by the standing committee to determine its own course of inquiry yet incorporate sufficient Agency involvement to ensure that the standing committee's work meets the Agency's specific needs.

Formulation of advice and reports. *Standing committee recommendations are developed in a timely, inclusive fashion.*

Overall, respondents agreed that the recommendations developed by the standing committee fulfilled the standing committee's purpose (56% agree¹). Further, respondents agreed that the recommendations were developed through a productive dialogue with the appropriate Agency staff (67% agree); included considerations of practicality (58% agree); were developed in a timely manner (52% agree); and were presented in a clear and specific way (52% agree).

Nonetheless, narrative responses and interview responses provided useful suggestions for improvement, including:

- ▶ Conduct more case studies and identify real-world examples to support recommendations. This approach would allow the Agency to better consider how effective implementation of recommendations is likely to be.
- ▶ Have EPA staff from relevant program offices present at standing committee meetings to hear all aspects of the standing committee's discussions, some of which may not be included in final recommendations.
- ▶ Make feasibility a key consideration in the development of recommendations.
- ▶ Reference in standing committee recommendations the reports and documents which have been used in deliberations and include as many of these as appendices as needed.

¹ Adjusted percentage excluding "Not Applicable" and "Skipped" responses.

- ▶ Encourage participation and feedback from relevant Agency staff to discuss the feasibility of standing committee proposals (e.g., statutory and legal limitations).
- ▶ Facilitate communication between the standing committee and relevant Agency managers during the early stages of the development of recommendations. These discussions should address the willingness of Agency managers to carry such recommendations forward.
- ▶ Include dissenting opinions in standing committee recommendations.
- ▶ Streamline NACEPT's recommendation review process to minimize delays in approving and transmitting recommendations to the Administrator.

Feedback on impact of advice and reports. *Most respondents have not received feedback from the Agency on the impact of their standing committee's recommendations.*

In both the survey and interviews respondents stated they received little feedback regarding the disposition of their recommendations. Only 27% of respondents agreed that the standing committee had received any feedback from the Agency as a result of the standing committee's advice or even that the Agency valued the advice as a positive contribution to its decision-making process (24% and 20% "Do Not Know" responses respectively). Suggestions on ways to improve the feedback to the standing committee include that NACEPT should:

- ▶ Establish a process by which an Agency response to standing committee recommendations is required after a reasonable period for review by the Administrator and program offices. This response should come from appropriate Agency officials and provide specific feedback on the Agency's intent to implement the recommendations. For those respondents who identified a specific timeframe, six months was the most commonly suggested review period. Further aspects of such suggestions include:
 - send quarterly e-mails and conduct annual phone calls to provide updates on the status of the implementation of standing committee recommendations;
 - send standing committee members a copy of newly issued regulations with a cover note providing an explanation of the actions which the Agency took; and
 - send a short note reiterating the committee's recommendations and detailing what the Agency is doing in response.
- ▶ Encourage EPA to invite a few standing committee members to serve as a monitoring group during the implementation of recommendations and to provide further advice on unresolved issues or new problems that emerge.

- ▶ Ensure its past members know that the Agency appreciates and is using their recommendations through an annual newsletter or other formal feedback mechanism.
- ▶ Ensure that any Agency feedback received by a standing committee chairperson is promptly distributed to all standing committee members.
- ▶ Establish and maintain a list of the current status (e.g., adopted, under consideration, rejected) of all NACEPT recommendations.

While many past participants had not received feedback from the Agency, other respondents wrote examples of feedback methods which had worked for their committee. These examples include:

- ▶ For the State and Local Programs Standing committee, some program offices sent a representative to standing committee meetings to give feedback. These representatives reported on the implementation of standing committee recommendations, asked clarifying questions on other recommendations, and explained why certain recommendations could not be implemented. Other offices sent written memos. Feedback was generally given six months after advice was issued by the committee, which worked well with the Agency's timeframe.
- ▶ One Agency official contacted the Total Maximum Daily Load standing committee members since its completion to discuss the standing committee's recommendations.

Communication within NACEPT. *Communication between standing committee members is adequate but improvements are needed for communications between meetings and to the Council.*

While quantitative data showed that respondents felt communication among standing committee members was effective (71% agree), fewer than one-third agreed that there was effective communication between the standing committee and the Council (31% agree; *Note:* 30% expressed no opinion). Additionally, written comments and interview responses further indicated that respondents saw opportunities for improvement in communication among members through both technical and procedural changes. Specific comments include:

- ▶ Provide better technological tools to communicate — such as conference calls and on-line posting of meeting agendas and background materials — to improve the timeliness of communication and reduce the volume of paper generated.
- ▶ Establish a way to for standing committee members to communicate between standing committee meetings (and possibly with other standing committees and the Council as well). Specific suggestions for such methods include:

- Send standing committee members meeting summaries that include what the Council would like to see next from each standing committee.
- Create a NACEPT web page for NACEPT members to use as a working tool. This page could provide relevant documents for members to read, progress updates on NACEPT activities and relevant agency activities, and a forum for members to share views and materials.
- ▶ Encourage more communication between the standing committee and the Council by appointing a standing committee member to serve as a “Council Liaison.”
- ▶ Facilitate communication across standing committees to promote cross-fertilization of ideas and avoid duplication of effort.

Meeting management. *Standing committee meetings are generally well-planned and structured yet improvements can be made in defining the consensus process, ensuring equitable participation, and keeping decisions on track.*

While the majority of respondents agreed that standing committee meetings were well-planned and structured to achieve the standing committee’s goals (55% agree), nearly one-quarter of respondents disagreed (23% disagree). These respondents offered a wealth of suggestions to improve meeting management, including:

- ▶ Ensure that a clear focus is set for each meeting, which keeps the work focused on achieving the standing committee’s goals.
- ▶ Establish and enforce meeting ground rules.
- ▶ Identify at the outset of the standing committee the standards for standing committee decision-making (i.e., process for seeking consensus).
- ▶ Define parameters (both in terms of time and scope of issues) for standing committee deliberations.
- ▶ Clearly assign tasks so that everyone understands what is expected of whom, and by when.
- ▶ Form breakout groups to focus on specific issues and develop preliminary recommendations.

The hardest part of the process was keeping everyone focused and happy, as committee members with different competing interests started to polarize.

A standing committee chairperson

Some respondents suggested that to improve the meetings process, each standing committee should have a professional facilitator assigned to the standing committee. By having an independent, objective procedural leader to keep discussions on track, maintain order, and ensure equitable participation, less burden would be placed on the chairperson, and all members could

focus on the issues at hand. Other respondents added that the facilitator should be well-versed in the topic area and that the same individual should work with the standing committee throughout the entire process.

TMDL used a color scheme to vote on recommendations. Red meant you could not live with including the recommendation, beige meant you could live with it, and green meant you thought it should definitely be included. When the final report was developed, a paragraph was usually included that addressed the other perspectives raised during deliberations.

TMDL Member

Technical support and background materials. *Standing committee members were generally positive about receiving timely and useful background and technical materials to make informed decisions.*

Most respondents agreed that materials provided to the standing committee were effective for use in standing committee discussions (68% agree) and adequate to support informed standing committee decision-making (67% agree). In addition, respondents were positive regarding the timeliness, usefulness, and thoroughness of the Agency's response to requests for information (78%, 70%, and 61% agree respectively²). A minority of respondents were critical of the information provided to the committee. Specific comments include:

- ▶ Adequate time to review background materials was often not provided — materials were frequently received during the week before meetings.
- ▶ Some background materials could have been better focused to the specific needs of the standing committee.
- ▶ It took several meetings for new standing committee members to “get up to speed,” which limited the effectiveness of standing committee discussions.
- ▶ For some standing committees, too much time was spent debating the definition of key terms rather than addressing the issues.
- ▶ The information made available to the standing committee was not technical enough to support the task the standing committee had been given.
- ▶ Some standing committees were not kept aware of relevant initiatives within the Agency.
- ▶ Real time technical advice was needed to answer specific questions raised during standing committee discussions.

² Adjusted percentage based on exclusion of “Not Applicable” responses.

- ▶ More involvement by Agency staff to prepare materials, perform analysis, and assist the standing committee is desirable.
- ▶ EPA's response to requests for information could have been more timely and more thorough.

Meeting schedule and location. *More frequent meetings and improved communication between meetings could improve standing committee effectiveness.*

Respondents generally agreed that sufficient notice was given of meetings and for most committees, that the frequency of standing committee meetings were sufficient (77% and 61% agree respectively). However, for some standing committees, respondents reported that the meeting schedule limited the standing committee's effectiveness and efficiency. Specific comments on standing committee meeting schedules include:

- ▶ The schedule left too much time between meetings and resulted in inefficiency "catching up" during meetings on developments and activities that occurred between meetings.
- ▶ Meetings were too infrequent to address the evolving nature of the standing committee's topic (i.e., information management/information technology issues).
- ▶ Quarterly meetings were the most commonly suggested schedule by respondents who suggested more frequent meetings.
- ▶ Standing committee meetings should include more opportunities for public participation to determine how other stakeholders view standing committee proposals.
- ▶ Local/regional committees could develop preliminary recommendations. Then, a national standing committee could integrate, review, and modify these preliminary suggestions into a formal report.

Meeting support. *Better meeting support can be achieved through use of technology.*

In addition to better meeting management, several respondents suggested that the efficiency of meetings could be improved through better meeting support and resources such as:

- ▶ More administrative support before, during, and after meetings to ensure that materials are prepared and distributed in a timely manner.
- ▶ Providing standing committees computers to use during meetings to facilitate efficient drafting and revision of recommendations. If the standing committee is to be working as a whole, the ability to project the computer display on a screen would be necessary.

Conclusion

Overall, NACEPT and its standing committees were found to have:

- ▶ fulfilled their charges;
- ▶ brought new, outside perspectives to EPA;
- ▶ provided timely and relevant advice and recommendations to the Agency; and
- ▶ influenced the outcome of Agency decisions, policies, and program activities.

At the same time, the effectiveness and impact of NACEPT would be increased with improvements in the following areas: meeting management and support, communications and feedback from EPA on the impact and use of its advice and recommendations, as summarized in Exhibit 2 below. Specific recommendations related to these findings are presented in the next chapter.

Exhibit 2. Summary of Principal Findings

| |
|--|
| NACEPT has many strengths: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Provides valuable input and advice to the Agency from a wide variety of stakeholders.● Provides a balanced representation of points of view through its membership.● Provides timely recommendations for Agency decision-making consistent with the charges of the standing committees.● Provides standing committees with adequate direction to fulfill their missions.● Operates through its standing committees in generally well-planned and structured meetings with sufficient technical support and background materials. |
| ... but also opportunities for improvements in the following areas: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Feedback from the Agency on the impact and use of recommendations and advice.● Early agreement on goals and purposes among standing committee members to ensure efficient progress.● Communication among standing committee members between meetings and between committees and the Council.● Planning for standing committee activities including defining the consensus process, methods for ensuring equitable participation, and providing for sufficient numbers of meetings to accomplish the committee's charge.● Facilitation and meeting support. |

Recommendations

This chapter presents the Study team's recommendations based on its analysis and interpretation of the survey and interview data. These findings confirm NACEPT's importance and impact over the last 10 years and validate and support its continuance as an independent source of stakeholder involvement. The findings also indicate opportunities for improvement in the operating effectiveness of the NACEPT and its standing committees, which could translate into greater impact on and value to EPA. These specific opportunities for improvement are presented below organized as follows:

- ▶ recommendations to the NACEPT Council;
- ▶ recommendations to standing committees; and
- ▶ recommendations to OCEM.

Recommendations to the NACEPT Council

I. NACEPT should more actively engage in strategic planning to identify the policy issues which NACEPT standing committees address.

The Study team found that NACEPT has provided valuable advice and introduced new perspectives to the Agency. This advice has covered a wide range of topics and expanded to new topic areas with success. Due to this demonstrated success in expanded areas, it is likely that NACEPT could further add value by identifying additional areas in which NACEPT believes stakeholder input would aid Agency decision-makers. Specific ways in which NACEPT can be more proactive and strategic in the advice it provides include:

- ▶ Survey Agency offices to determine what the major issues for the Agency will be in the coming year. Based on the results, have the Council (or its Executive Committee) identify the committees currently operating which might be able to address those issues. Where the issues are beyond the scope and expertise of extant committees, recommendations for new standing committees could be developed to be presented to the Administrator.
- ▶ Engage key Agency stakeholders (such as the Science Advisory Board and non-governmental organizations) in identifying Agency policies which might be improved through review by the NACEPT process. Have the NACEPT Council and (or its Executive Committee) review these suggestions and make recommendations to the EPA Administrator.

II. NACEPT should better publicize itself and its work to all parts of the Agency and beyond.

While the Study team found that many Agency officials are well-informed of NACEPT and its advisory role, others were not aware of NACEPT activities relevant to their office. To maximize the value of NACEPT to the Agency, NACEPT must publicize its works through activities such as:

- ▶ An enhanced Internet presence. NACEPT's website should be integrated with other Agency sites relevant to the topics which NACEPT is investigating. OCEM should partner with such offices to highlight NACEPT's role in the office's decision-making.
- ▶ Partnering with other Agency stakeholder involvement programs to create and maintain a comprehensive list of stakeholder advice reports. To ensure the utility of such a database, advertise its usefulness to EPA staff (both upper management and line staff).
- ▶ Utilizing existing Agency communication mechanisms (e.g., Enviro-Newsbrief) to inform Agency staff about the availability and content of NACEPT reports and products.

III. NACEPT should streamline the process of developing and delivering recommendations.

The Study found that standing committee members were often frustrated by the delay in the delivery of advice to the Administrator caused by the Council's review and approval of recommendations. These findings suggest that NACEPT should re-evaluate its recommendation approval process to provide advice more quickly and directly. Potential changes to the recommendation process might include:

- ▶ De-emphasize the final report as the primary output of a standing committee. Instead, seek ways in which to involve program offices and Agency officials more in the standing committee discussions and the development of recommendations. When appropriate, standing committee reports might even include reactions from or descriptions of program office involvement.
- ▶ Invite program office officials to comment on the standing committee's draft recommendations prior to the preparation of the final report.
- ▶ Investigate technological options such as Internet-based collaborative groupware to expedite the Council review process.

- ▶ Incorporate Council review earlier in the recommendation development process to comment on interim recommendations.
- ▶ Implement techniques within the Council to ensure the thorough yet timely review of standing committee reports. One such technique would be the establishment of Council review subcommittees which would be responsible for framing and presenting any issues which require Council discussion to the larger Council body and shepherding the report through such review.

IV. NACEPT should conduct an evaluation of standing committee processes upon the completion of the standing committee's work.

This study was the first opportunity for many NACEPT members to provide direct feedback to the Council on their view of how well the NACEPT standing committee process worked. The findings revealed a wealth of information which will be used to improve future NACEPT efforts. To ensure the continuous improvement of NACEPT, it is recommended that similar self-assessments be conducted at the close of each standing committee. To efficiently conduct such an evaluation, NACEPT might:

- ▶ Conduct a short written survey of all standing committee members on standing committee processes and other topics similar to those addressed in this study.
- ▶ Conduct telephone interviews with a random sample of standing committee participants to gain further insight on the NACEPT process.
- ▶ Encourage each DFO to conduct “close-out” interviews with the standing committee-program office liaison and standing committee chairperson to discuss the management of the standing committee and assess whether all issues laid out in the standing committee’s work plan were efficiently and comprehensively addressed. (The DFO would use performance measures set at the outset to guide this process and develop a final assessment including lessons learned.)
- ▶ Provide NACEPT members with a specific point of contact within OCEM who would be available for discussion of any aspect of the NACEPT process on which the members has a concern or question.

V. NACEPT should take responsibility for maintaining contact with its past members.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the Study was the extent to which past participants were unaware of NACEPT’s and the Agency’s actions after the end of their standing committee. NACEPT’s alumni represent a vast network of talented and committed individuals, many of whom continue to participate extensively in the public debate on environmental protection and

management at the federal, state, tribal, and local level. They also represent a body of supporters for the value of NACEPT and its advice. As a long-term institutional body, it is the Council which is in the position to monitor and communicate to past and present members. These communications should highlight what NACEPT is currently addressing as well as recent activities the Agency has taken in the areas in which NACEPT standing committees have worked. Specifically, NACEPT could:

- ▶ Develop an internal tracking system of standing committee recommendations and resultant Agency activities. The system would be updated as the Agency implements activities based on NACEPT recommendations (potentially identified by standing committee-program office liaison) and the results summarized in a periodic newsletter.
- ▶ Establish an e-mail list-serve on the NACEPT website which would send bulleted e-mail updates on current NACEPT and Agency activities to those interested. These short e-mails would not be comprehensive, but focused on directing recipients to specific websites should further information be desired.

Recommendations to Standing Committees

-
- I. Standing committees should prioritize their recommendations and include suggested schedules and performance targets for implementation of each recommendation.**
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While both NACEPT participants and Agency officials generally viewed standing committee recommendations as valuable to Agency decision-making, several participants noted that standing committee recommendations were too vague, too unrealistic, or too conceptual to allow adequate assessment of Agency implementation to be made. As a result, it is recommended that standing committees:

- ▶ Consider the practicality of implementation and attempt to avoid any recommendation with technical, statutory, and regulatory barriers which might hinder successful implementation.
- ▶ Prioritize their recommendations in order of importance.
- ▶ Limit the overall volume of recommendations to heighten focus on the most important few.
- ▶ Include, where possible, implementation goals and performance measures as part of the recommendations. (Such goals and measures could also serve as ways in which to assess the Agency's use of standing committee recommendations.)

II. Standing committees should request a formal response from the Agency to all standing committee reports.

The least positive aspect of the Study findings was the extremely limited extent to which members had received feedback as to the Agency's use of the standing committee's development of each recommendation. To improve this lack of feedback, it is recommended that:

- ▶ Appropriate Agency officials be encouraged to attend and participate in the standing committee's recommendations to provide immediate feedback on specific issues when possible.
- ▶ An appropriate time frame be agreed during the establishment of the standing committee for Agency review and comment on recommendations.
- ▶ Standing committee members be informed of the Administrator's or program office's decisions on the standing committee recommendations. When possible, implementation schedules should be created and included to allow subsequent follow-up by interested standing committee members.
- ▶ At an appropriate time after completion of the standing committee's work, the program office liaison or other program office official should communicate to standing committee members updates on the disposition of standing committee's recommendations.

Recommendations to the Office of Cooperative Environmental Management (OCEM)

I. OCEM should ensure productive interaction between NACEPT standing committees and relevant Agency program offices.

While NACEPT is formally chartered to provide advice to the EPA Administrator, several standing committees and program offices have worked intensively and directly together very successfully. Such direct interaction seems to have benefitted both the standing committee and the program office. The standing committee gained valuable technical assistance. The program office, which developed a better understanding of the diversity of individual stakeholder perspectives, received input in a much quicker timeframe, and was exposed to the standing committee's discussions beyond the final consensus recommendations. Based on such successes, it is suggested that OCEM actively foster more direct collaboration between NACEPT standing committees and relevant Agency offices. To encourage better cooperation between these groups, OCEM could:

- ▶ Work closely with the appropriate program office managers during the establishment of the standing committee to ensure that the standing committee has the right membership composition and charge to provide the advice which the program office needs.
- ▶ Require the program office to designate a “standing committee-program office liaison” and allow for the requirements of this role in budgeting staff time. Guidelines for such a liaison should include technical background, attendance at meetings, and post-committee responsibilities (e.g., ensuring a response to the recommendations).
- ▶ Sponsor a meeting of the standing committee chairperson, DFO, standing committee-program office liaison, and program office managers in advance of the first committee meeting. The goal of this meeting would be to build consensus regarding the priorities and goals for the standing committee, establish a sense of teamwork, and develop shared understanding of the time line of activities for the standing committee.

II. OCEM should ensure that standing committee work is adequately planned and managed by the DFO and standing committee chairperson to achieve the committee’s goals in an efficient manner.

While survey respondents and interviewees reported that, in general, standing committees provided the Agency with valuable recommendations in a timely fashion, several noted that the recommendation development process could be improved. Specifically, few standing committees utilized project management techniques (such as activity workplans) to guide the standing committee’s investigation. To improve the efficiency of NACEPT’s standing committees, it is recommended that OCEM effectuate better standing committee management by methods such as:

- ▶ Develop a set of standing committee management guidelines which identify effective project management techniques for standing committee work. Such guidelines should include techniques to:
 - develop an workplan and timeline;
 - define interim and endpoint goals;
 - set performance measures and methods to measure performance toward goals; and
 - keep the standing committee’s work on track.
- ▶ Require that the DFO, standing committee chairperson, and relevant program office staff develop a workplan, timeline, and product definition for the standing committee's activities. (These documents could then be used for scheduling

Council review of standing committee products, to assess the standing committee's degree of operational success, and by OCEM to determine whether a standing committee has completed its work.)

III. OCEM should inform program offices of the qualifications needed to be a DFO and provide training to appointed DFOs.

Due to the need for NACEPT's operations to be compliant to Federal Advisory Committee Act regulations, the DFO and OCEM are responsible for ensuring proper standing committee operations. To ensure efficient management and oversight of this compliance, OCEM should take additional steps to ensure that every standing committee DFO is adequately trained and conversant in FACA requirements. Findings from the survey and interviews suggest that:

- ▶ OCEM should ensure all DFOs are well trained on the NACEPT process. The most effective method would be that the DFO preferentially be from OCEM. If it is necessary that the DFO be from another office, it is important that this individual has specific FACA training prior to the establishment of the standing committee. In addition, program office DFOs should be provided a contact within OCEM to act as a mentor throughout the process. This mentor would be a resource to ensure that the standing committee is always in compliance with the requirements of FACA.
- ▶ At the first standing committee meeting, the DFO should ensure that each standing committee member is aware of the relevant FACA requirements as well as the way in which the NACEPT process works (i.e., explain the Council review process).

IV. OCEM should develop better ways for NACEPT members to communicate between meetings.

The Study team found that the majority of communication within NACEPT occurs during standing committee meetings. While such communication has generally been adequate to support standing committee decision-making, it is evident that increased communication with other NACEPT standing committees, the Council, and between meetings might increase the efficiency of the standing committee's work and allow consensus to be reached more quickly. Based on these findings, it is suggested that OCEM:

- ▶ Develop a website for standing committees to use as a resource and tool to accomplish their work. Such a website should include:
 - security features which protect the integrity of committee communications but allows access from universal locations;

- a designated area for each standing committee containing its activity workplan, background materials, and agendas; and
 - user-friendly features to allow appropriate standing committee members to post comments or materials (for example, templates could be provided to allow quick posting of meeting summaries).
- ▶ Provide DFOs with technical tools and training to enhance the use of electronic communication to standing committee members (for example, Adobe Acrobat software and training might enhance e-mail distribution of documents; a group voice-mail system could be used to alert members of newly released documents available on the Internet).
 - ▶ Develop an electronic newsletter to be issued after Council meetings detailing the events of the last meeting, upcoming key events of various standing committees, and other NACEPT announcements.

V. OCEM should establish an enhanced formal method for the establishment of standing committees.

In the case of a few standing committees, the Study team found that standing committee members were uncertain as to the standing committee's purpose and the expectations of the Agency. In addition, some respondents expressed concerns that their standing committee's membership lacked the necessary technical and legal knowledge to provide specific recommendations. To address these findings, it is recommended that OCEM re-evaluate the process by which new standing committees are established. To improve the process, OCEM might:

- ▶ Develop a brochure which details what a program office needs to do to have a NACEPT standing committee established. The process should include both practical considerations, such as the paperwork required by OCEM, as well as the conceptual needs, such as framing an issue requiring advice.
- ▶ Involve one or more Council representatives with experience in the proposed topic area to review the program office's request for a standing committee. As individuals familiar with both the NACEPT process and the area of study, these individuals are in a unique position to help clarify the standing committee's purpose, provide a preliminary stakeholder's perspective on the topic, and assess the timeframe necessary to address the scope of the investigation.
- ▶ Work collaboratively with the program office and the Council to identify potential members who have a willingness to work toward consensus and the required expertise.

VI. OCEM should improve the NACEPT and standing committee orientation process for new members.

The Study team found that on some issues (such as the organizational structure and roles of NACEPT) members did not fully understand how NACEPT works or recognize that previous standing committees had addressed very similar topics. Several respondents wrote that such lack of awareness was detrimental to standing committee efficiency. To address this issue, it is suggested that OCEM re-evaluate its current orientation process. Suggestions for improving the orientation program include:

- ▶ Develop an orientation process which can be used effectively both at the establishment of a standing committee as well as for members who join later in the standing committee process.
- ▶ Send new standing committee members a briefing paper on the committee. This paper would present the standing committee's charge, activities to date, and prior relevant NACEPT recommendations and reports in this topic area.
- ▶ Produce an "Introduction to NACEPT" video which provides new members a brief history and overview of NACEPT and the relevant aspects of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. This video could be sent to new participants and program office liaisons in advance of meeting attendance, shown at a pre-meeting coffee, or posted on the website as a digital video so that valuable meeting time is not consumed by the need to orient new members.
- ▶ Create an informational online briefing which, using simple graphics and text, which allows a new NACEPT member to review the NACEPT process and FACA background at a convenient time through the Internet. (If desired, a paper copy could be developed as well and mailed to individuals at their request.)

VII. OCEM should develop a formal facilitation program to ensure proper support for each standing committee.

While survey respondents stated that the NACEPT process worked adequately, the Study team found that the efficiency of standing committee meeting management can be substantially improved. To take advantage of this opportunity, it is recommended that a facilitation program be implemented for all standing committees. Specific aspects of such a facilitation program might include:

- ▶ Provide each DFO and standing committee chairperson with a guidebook which details how to host efficient and effective FACA meetings and outlines the potential role and use of trained facilitators to assist in the committee's work. Specific topics within the manual should include guidelines for distribution of meeting agenda and advance materials; techniques and options for standing

committee decision-making processes; and guidance for how to determine if professional facilitation is required.

- ▶ Develop a roster of qualified facilitators which NACEPT can call upon for support to standing committees. The roster should focus on facilitators who have subject matter knowledge in the environmental field, FACA, and appropriate experience with senior-level managers within both private industry and government.
- ▶ Make resources available for meeting facilitators and meeting support staff (e.g., note-takers, laptop computers, etc.) especially for working meetings during which recommendations will be developed.

Conclusion

Although the Study team found that overall NACEPT has been an effective source of stakeholder involvement and has had a significant positive influence on EPA's decision making, policies, and program activities, it also found areas for improvement. These recommendations, addressed to the Council, its standing committees, and OCEM, concern both the process of NACEPT's operations and the substance of its work. Exhibit 3 presents a summary of the recommendations.

Exhibit 3. Recommendations

The NACEPT Council should:

- Do more strategic planning to identify the policy issues which NACEPT standing committees address.
- Better publicize itself and its work to all parts of the Agency and beyond.
- Streamline the process of developing and delivering recommendations.
- Conduct an evaluation of standing committee processes after the completion of the standing committee's work.
- Take responsibility for maintaining contact with its past members.

NACEPT Standing Committees should:

- Prioritize their recommendations and include suggested schedules and performance targets for implementation for each recommendation.
- Request a formal response from the Agency to all standing committee reports.

The Office of Cooperative Environmental Management should:

- Ensure productive interaction directly between NACEPT standing committees and relevant Agency program offices.
- Ensure that standing committee work is adequately planned and managed by the DFO and standing committee chairperson to achieve committee goals in an efficient manner.
- Make clear to the program offices the qualifications needed to be a DFO and provide training to appointed DFOs.
- Develop better ways for NACEPT members to communicate between meetings.
- Establish an enhanced formal method for the establishment of standing committees.
- Improve the NACEPT and standing committee orientation process for new members.
- Develop a formal facilitation program to ensure proper support for each standing committee.

Conclusion

Since its establishment in 1988, NACEPT has served as an important and independent source of stakeholder advice to EPA across a wide range of subjects. Through its 26 standing committees, NACEPT has involved over 700 past and current members in meaningful dialogue and deliberation and has produced over 50 major reports containing over 1,000 recommendations. The value of these recommendations, advice, and counsel is confirmed not only by the views of NACEPT past members and Agency officials, but also in the numerous documented examples of the recommendations influencing the Agency's decisions, policies, and program activities. As a result, the number of NACEPT standing committees and the range of issues that they have addressed has grown over the last years.

From this rich heritage of success, NACEPT is preparing for its second decade and making adjustment to ensure and enhance its continued effectiveness. Among these changes are the continued expansion in the breadth and variety of issues on its agenda and a greater focus on strategic planning, including efforts to identify emerging issues of importance to EPA and its constituents.

This study continues and contributes to these improvement efforts by providing findings and recommendations related to NACEPT's operations and effectiveness. Collectively, these findings and recommendations will help to guide NACEPT, its standing committees, and OCEM in ensuring the ongoing vitality and importance of NACEPT into the future.

Appendix A — NACEPT Standing Committee Acronyms

| Acronym | Standing Committee Name | Dates of Activity | Topic Area |
|---------|---|---------------------|--|
| CBEP | Community Based Environmental Protection Committee | 1996-1997 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| ECMC | Environmental Capital Markets Committee | 1998-Ongoing | General Agency Policy or Management |
| EETC | Environmental Education and Training Committee | 1988-1990 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| EFAB | Environmental Financial Advisory Board | 1989-1990 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| EGTF | Effluent Guidelines Task Force | 1992-Ongoing | Program/Media-Specific |
| EIAC | <i>Environmental Information and Assessments Committee</i> | <i>1994-1996</i> | <i>Information Management and Technology</i> |
| EIET | Environmental Information Economics and Technology Committee | 1995-1996 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| EIPAC | <i>Environmental Information and Public Access Committee</i> | <i>1998-Ongoing</i> | <i>Information Management and Technology</i> |
| EITC | Ecosystems Implementation Tools Committee | 1994-1995 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| EMCAP | Environmental Measures/Chemical Accident Prevention Committee | 1990-1996 | Program/Media-Specific |
| ESEC | Ecosystems Sustainable Economies Committee | 1994-1996 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| ESTATS | <i>Environmental Statistics Committee</i> | <i>1992-1997</i> | <i>Information Management and Technology</i> |
| FSAC | Food Safety Advisory Committee | 1996 | Program/Media-Specific |
| IIC | <i>Information Impacts Committee</i> | <i>1996-1997</i> | <i>Information Management and Technology</i> |
| IRM | <i>Information Resources Management Strategic Planning Task Force</i> | <i>1994</i> | <i>Information Management and Technology</i> |
| PPEC | Pollution Prevention Education Committee | 1991-1993 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| RCC | Reinvention Criteria Committee | 1996-Ongoing | General Agency Policy or Management |
| S&L | State and Local Programs Committee | 1988-1993 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| SEC | Superfund Evaluation Committee | 1993-1994 | Program/Media-Specific |
| TDR | Toxic Data Reporting Committee | 1993-Ongoing | Program/Media-Specific |
| TEC | Trade and Environment Committee/International Environmental Committee | 1989-1993 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| TIE | Technology Innovation and Economics Committee | 1989-1993 | General Agency Policy or Management |
| TITLEVI | Title VI Implementation Advisory Committee | 1998-Ongoing | General Agency Policy or Management |
| TMDL | Total Maximum Daily Load Committee | 1996-1998 | Program/Media-Specific |
| TRAC | Tolerance Reassessment Advisory Committee | 1998 | Program/Media-Specific |
| WIPP | Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Review Committee | 1992-Ongoing | Program/Media-Specific |

Appendix B — History and Overview of NACEPT

Reasons for Establishment

During the 1980s, a variety of factors led to the realization by the EPA that in the future, both non-federal government agencies and the private sector would have a larger role in environmental protection. In addition, federal legislation such as the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986 encouraged joint government-industry collaboration to develop new technologies. In accord with these trends, in March 1987, EPA Administrator Thomas created the Task Force on Technology Transfer. This Task Force was charged to develop recommendations as to how EPA could most effectively leverage its resources to support and encourage technology transfer and training through cooperative activities with industry, academia, and non-federal government agencies. As a result of these events, the National Advisory Council for Environmental Technology Transfer (NACETT), was established in July 1988.

Original Charge

The National Council for Environmental Technology Transfer (NACETT) was charged to consult with and make recommendations to the EPA Administrator on a continuing basis on technology transfer issues associated with:

- the management of environmental problems;
- activities, functions, and policies relevant to the Agency under the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986; and
- other statutes, executive orders, and regulations affecting the conduct of technology transfer activities within EPA.

NACETT's activities were designed to:

- promote continuing consultation and debate to ensure mutual understanding of the differing perspectives, concerns and needs among the institutions involved in environmental management;
- maximize the extent to which each institutional participant understands, accepts, and fulfills its environmental management responsibilities;
- facilitate broad public sharing of information on environmental problems as well as alternative approaches and implementation strategies for addressing them; and
- promote consideration of alternative strategies for leveraging resources to address environmental needs.

Evolution of the Charge

1988-1990

During its first two years, NACETT standing committees investigated various aspects of technology transfer delivering recommendations on environmental education and training, state and local programs, and technology innovation issues. In addition, NACETT sponsored projects that resulted in the development of new institutions which demonstrated real-world cooperative environmental management, assisted in the formulation of an Agency position on reauthorization of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and addressed other issues in response to internal Agency requests (such as requests from the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response to provide input to chemical accident prevention and hazardous waste remediation issues.) It became clear that the Council's initial technology transfer title did not fit the broad environmental policy formulation role to which the Council had evolved and as a result, the Council was renamed from NACETT to the National Advisory Council on Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) in July 1990. To guide NACEPT, a Mission Statement was adopted:

NACEPT

Bridging the gap from problem identification to environmental solutions through successful program implementation, cooperation, and consensus-building by business, government, educational institutions, and private organizations.

1990-1993

In November 1990, Administrator Reilly met with the NACEPT Executive Committee and asked the Council to address broad, cross-cutting issues related to pollution prevention to provide input for the Agency's Congressional reports regarding the then-new Pollution Prevention Act. Consequently, from 1990 through 1993, NACEPT standing committees investigated Chemical Accident Prevention, Effluent Guidelines, the use of environmental statistics in pollution prevention, and education issues related to pollution prevention.

1993 - Present

In 1993, Administrator Browner continued NACEPT's central stakeholder advisory role and expanded NACEPT's charge to provide advice on an even wider range of issues including information management and technology. Since 1993, NACEPT standing committees have addressed topics such as community based environmental protection, Agency reinvention, and information resource management. In 1997, a collaborative effort between the Administrator's office, the Office of Reinvention, and Office of Cooperative Environmental Management (OCEM) resulted in a realignment of NACEPT creating a revised NACEPT structure increasing the role of program offices in the NACEPT process through standing committee management with OCEM oversight. Today, NACEPT works collaboratively with the Office of the Administrator, EPA program offices, and other federal agencies to investigate a breadth of

environmental protection related issues including food safety regulations, environmental justice policies, and public access to environmental information.

NACEPT's Structure

NACEPT is organized by a three-tiered committee structure of the NACEPT Council, an Executive Committee, and standing committees. Each type of committee has a specific role in the NACEPT process. An organization chart of NACEPT is presented in Appendix C.

NACEPT Council

The NACEPT Council is the formal long-term established body which is responsible for providing advice across a breadth of issues to the Administrator. To accomplish this, the Council operates as a steering committee, coordinating, overseeing, and reviewing the work of the standing committees which are established under the Council's auspices.

The Council is comprised of senior-level representatives from a broad range of interests including government, business and industry, academia, professional associations, and labor, environmental advocacy, and community groups who serve renewable terms (usually two years). Council members generally also serve as a member of one or more NACEPT standing committee.

NACEPT Executive Committee

NACEPT's Executive Committee, with the assistance of OCEM, is responsible for the overall planning for the Council and coordination between standing committees. It is comprised of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and standing committee chairpersons.

NACEPT Standing Committees

The majority of NACEPT's operations are accomplished through standing committees, which are Council subcommittees established and charged to address specific issues. Standing committees are comprised of qualified professionals experienced in the area of the standing committee's focus. Membership includes representatives from government, business, industry, academia, and relevant non-governmental organizations to assure balanced consideration of the range of perspectives. While all Council members serve on at least one standing committee, standing committees also include issue-specific experts who are not Council members.

Standing committees operate with independent courses of action and standing committee chairpersons. Standing committees hold public meetings, establish workgroups or subcommittees to look at issues in depth, and interact with relevant Agency program offices. Committees develop advice to fulfill their charges and present draft reports to the Council for review, approval, and transmittal to the Administrator or other Agency customer.

Overview of the NACEPT Process

NACEPT is a stakeholder-input process which is utilized for a variety of reasons to accomplish a great range of goals. The reasons why NACEPT standing committees are established and the way in which specific standing committees operate may vary considerably. In that sense, there is not a single “NACEPT process”. Nevertheless, the process can be broadly characterized through four steps:

- 1) NACEPT is asked to provide advice.
- 2) A standing committee is charged to consider issues and develop draft advice.
- 3) The standing committee’s draft advice is reviewed and approved by the Council.
- 4) NACEPT advice is provided, possibly including dissenting opinions and recommendations for further study.

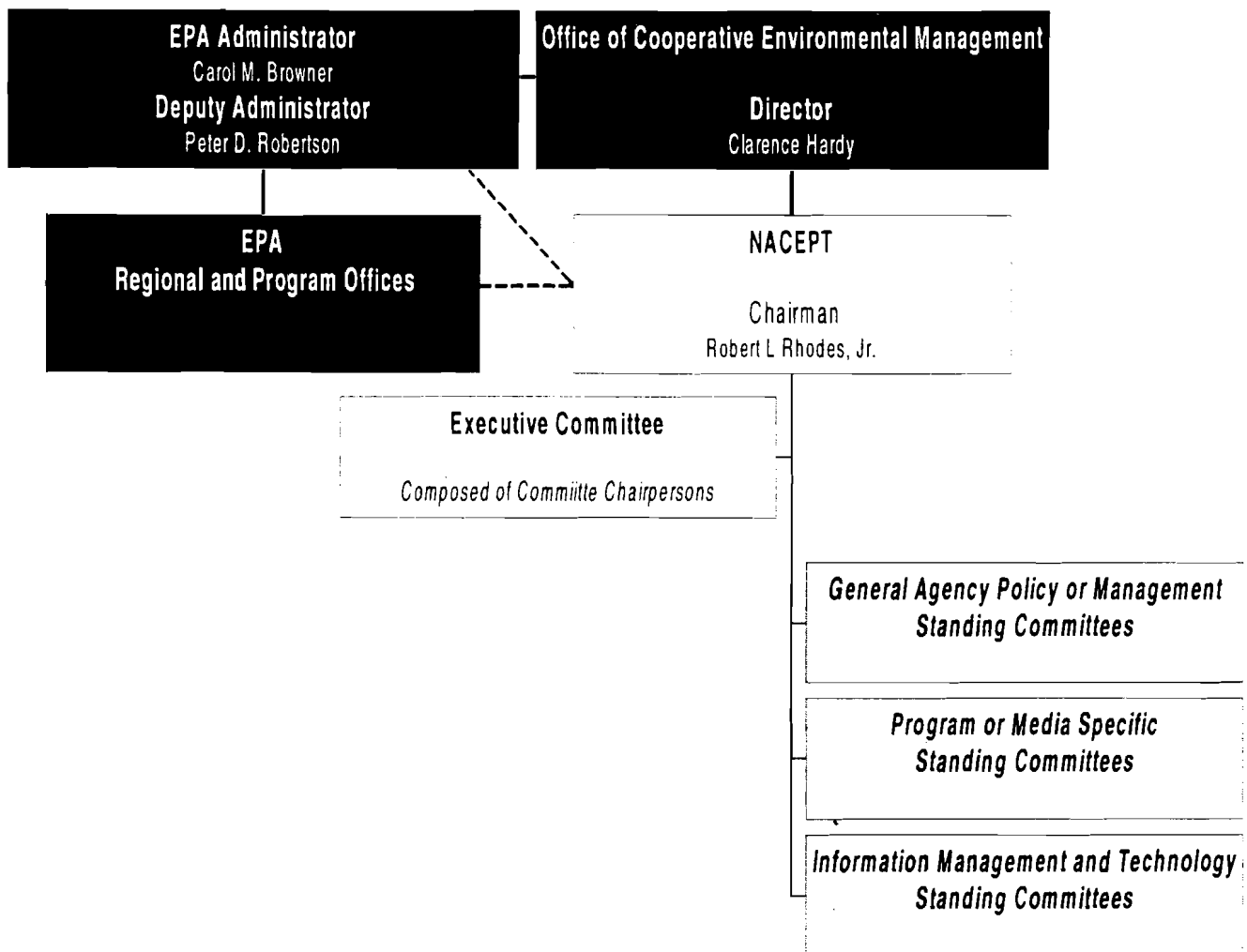
Management of NACEPT

NACEPT is a federal advisory committee, governed by federal legislation such as the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972. FACA requires that advisory groups be:

(1) chartered; (2) balanced and diverse in terms of perspective, professional qualifications, and experience; and (3) kept to a minimum, established only when “determined to be essential” and disestablished upon completion of work. Further, the business of these groups is to be: (1) announced in the Federal Register; (2) open to public attendance and comment as agency guidelines permit; and (3) conducted promptly.

FACA legislation includes specific management guidelines for federal advisory committees. OCEM is responsible for the operations and management of the NACEPT Council and Executive Council. In addition, FACA requires that each standing committee has a Designated Federal Official (DFO) to oversee its operations and FACA compliance. DFOs assist the standing committee chairperson, the Executive Council, and OCEM in the planning of the standing committee’s work and act as a communications conduit within the standing committee and between the standing committee and relevant EPA program offices. In most cases, the DFO is a member of the OCEM staff, although it is possible for the DFO to be an Agency program office staffperson working under the oversight of OCEM.

Appendix C — 1999 Organizational Chart of NACEPT, OCEM, and the Administrator's Office



Appendix D - Key Aspects of NACEPT Charters

1988 - Original Charter

Purpose and Authority

The purpose of the Advisory Council is to provide advice and counsel to the Administrator of EPA on technology transfer associated with the management of environmental problems. The Advisory Council is being established in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act 5, U.S.C. (App.I)9(c). The Advisory Council provides independent advice and counsel to the Administrator on such specific technology transfer activities, issues and needs as:

- identifying the barriers impeding environmental technology transfer and training efforts and possible approaches for reducing these barriers;
- creating a positive institutional climate within EPA with respect to technology transfer and training activities;
- promoting cooperative, mutually-supportive EPA-state relationships aimed at establishing more effective environmental management at federal, state and local levels;
- increasing and institutionalizing communication among all levels of government, the business community, the academic, educational, and training community and the international community, with the aim of increasing non-federal resources and improving the effectiveness of federal and non-federal resources directed at solving environmental problems, and establishing direct links between these resources and those who need assistance to solve environmental problems;
- developing and applying an appropriate array of existing and new delivery mechanisms for meeting technology transfer and training needs;
- implementing the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986 which facilitates access to science and technology, and other related legislation, executive orders and regulations previously enacted or which may be enacted in the future;
- reviewing any periodic EPA reports describing the Agency's progress in implementing statutes, executive orders and regulations on technology transfer; and
- assessing alternative approaches for measuring the environmental benefits of technology transfer activities.

Scope of the Activity

The Advisory Council advises, consults with, and makes recommendations on a continuing basis to the Administrator on technology transfer issues associated with the management of environmental problems generally and in matters relating to activities, functions, and policies under the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986 and other statutes, executive orders and regulations affecting the conduct of the technology transfer activities within EPA. The Advisory Council will analyze problems, present findings, make recommendations, conduct meetings and perform other activities necessary for the attainment of its objectives. Environmental technology transfer consists of the purposeful transfer of technical and environmental management information and "know how" from one individual or organization to one or more others where it is needed to achieve environmental protection objectives. Such technology transfer may take the form of training, technical assistance or targeted information dissemination. It includes such transfers between and among interstate, state, regional and local agencies with environmental responsibilities, EPA regional offices, EPA headquarters and EPA laboratories. It also includes such transfers between and among businesses; academic, educational and training institutions; federal, state and local government organizations; international organizations; and governmental organizations in other countries, especially such transfers undertaken to facilitate or accelerate the development, commercialization or use of needed new environmental technology or skills.

Composition

The Advisory Council consists of a group of independent experts drawn from industry and business, academic, educational and training institutions; federal, state and local government agencies; international organizations; environmental groups; and non-profit entities. The group shall be of sufficient size and diversity to provide the range of perspectives required to assess each element of the implementation of the Federal Technology Transfer Act and related statutes, executive orders and regulations and, generally, the technology transfer issues associated with the management of environmental problems. The Advisory Council may constitute itself into such specialized committees on an ad hoc or standing basis as it finds necessary to carry out its responsibilities.

Duration

The Advisory Council shall be needed on a continuing basis and may be renewed beyond its initial two-year period, as authorized in accordance with Section 14 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

1990 Charter Renewal (and renaming)

Purpose and Authority

This Charter is to renew the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) which was previously established as the National Advisory Council for Environmental Technology Transfer (NACETT) on July 7, 1988, for an additional two-year period in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. (App.I) 9(c). The purpose of the Advisory Council is to provide advice and counsel to the Administrator of EPA on issues associated with the management of environmental problems. The Advisory Council provides independent advice and counsel to the Administrator on such specific activities, issues and needs as: identifying the barriers impeding environmental technology transfer and training efforts and possible approaches for reducing these barriers; creating a positive institutional climate within EPA with respect to technology transfer and training activities; promoting cooperative, mutually-supportive EPA-state relationships aimed at establishing more effective environmental management at federal, state and local levels; increasing and institutionalizing communication among all levels of government, the business community, the academic, educational and training community and the international community, with the aim of increasing non-federal resources and improving the effectiveness of federal and non-federal resources directed at solving environmental problems, and establishing direct links between these resources and those who need assistance to solve environmental problems; developing and applying an appropriate array of existing and new delivery mechanisms for meeting technology transfer and training needs; implementing the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986, Executive Order 12591, which facilitates access to science and technology, and other related legislation, executive orders and regulations previously enacted or which may be enacted in the future; reviewing any periodic EPA reports describing the Agency's progress in implementing statutes, executive orders and regulations; and assessing alternative approaches for measuring the environmental benefits of technology transfer and related activities.

Scope of the Activity

The Advisory Council advises, consults with and makes recommendations on a continuing basis to the Administrator on issues associated with the management of environmental problems generally and on matters relating to activities, functions and policies under the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986 and other statutes, executive orders, and regulations affecting the conduct of technology transfer activities within EPA. The Advisory Council will analyze problems, present findings, make recommendations, conduct meetings and perform other activities necessary for the attainment of its objectives. Environmental technology transfer consist of the purposeful transfer of technical and environmental management information and "know how" from one individual or organization to one or more others where it is needed to achieve environmental protection objectives. Such activity may take the form of training, technical assistance or targeted information dissemination. It includes such transfers between and among interstate, state, regional and local agencies with environmental

responsibilities, EPA regional offices, EPA headquarters and EPA laboratories. It also includes such transfers between and among businesses; academic, educational and training institutions; federal, state and local governmental organizations; international organizations and governmental organizations in other countries, especially such transfers undertaken to facilitate or accelerate the development, commercialization or use of needed new environmental technology or skills.

1994 Charter Renewal

Purpose and Authority

This Charter renews the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) which was originally established on July 7, 1988, for an additional two-year period in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App. 2 section 9(c). The purpose of NACEPT is to provide advice and counsel to the Administrator of EPA on issues associated with environmental management and policy. It is determined that NACEPT is in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed on the agency by law.

Objectives

NACEPT provides independent advice and counsel to the Administrator on issues such as:

- developing approaches for reducing barriers to environmental technology development and transfer, institutionalizing public and private pollution prevention programs, ecosystems management and environmental sustainability and community empowerment;
- fostering improved global environmental management, and increasing the focus on environment in international trade and contributions to U.S. competitiveness;
- increasing communication and understanding among all levels of government, business, non-governmental organizations and academia, with the goal of increasing non-federal resources and improving the effectiveness of federal and non-federal resources directed at solving environmental economic problems;
- implementing statutes, executive orders and regulations previously enacted or which may be enacted in the future;
- reviewing progress in implementing statutes, executive orders and regulations; and
- assessing approaches for measuring the environmental benefits of technology transfer and alternative approaches to environmental protection.

Scope of the Activity

NACEPT advises, consults with, and makes recommendations on a continuing basis to the Administrator on issues associated with environmental management generally and on matters relating to activities, functions and policies under the federal environmental statutes, executive orders, regulations, and policies affecting environmental management responsibilities of EPA. NACEPT conducts meetings, analyzes problems, presents findings, makes recommendations, and performs other activities as necessary for the attainment of its objectives. It advises the Administrator on ways to improve development and implementation of domestic and international environmental management policies, programs, and technologies. Ecosystems protection, NAFTA implementation and Information Resources Management Strategic Planning are some of the issues currently under review. NACEPT also provides external input to Assistant Administrators on selected program topics where appropriate. NACEPT, working with other EPA organizations, advises the Administrator on broad, cross-cutting environmental policy and technology issues and priorities.

Appendix E — Bibliography of NACEPT Publications

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Appendix F — Overview of the Study Methodology

A key methodological challenge of this study was defining what “effectiveness” means in the context of a stakeholder advisory process such as NACEPT. Viewed narrowly, NACEPT provides a structured process of providing advice to the EPA Administrator in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). From this perspective, testing the effectiveness of NACEPT is relatively straightforward and can be measured and assessed in terms of the number of standing committees constituted and the reports and recommendations of the Council.

Another, broader definition of effectiveness would be to assess the extent to which NACEPT’s recommendations had influenced or changed EPA’s decision making, policies, or actions. Such a definition poses greater methodological challenges because EPA may already be addressing these issues and establishing cause-and-effect relationships between NACEPT’s recommendations and subsequent Agency actions may be difficult. Still another definition of effectiveness would include the extent to which NACEPT had created new dialogue on issues or added new perspectives, which might have influenced decisions and activities outside of EPA, such as at the state and local level.

Based on input from current NACEPT members leading this study, no single definition was exclusively used. Instead, the Study team identified the following four areas of focus to determine NACEPT’s effectiveness:

- ▶ Did NACEPT standing committees fulfill their charters?
- ▶ Did NACEPT bring outside perspectives to EPA?
- ▶ Did NACEPT provide useful and timely recommendations?
- ▶ Did NACEPT have observable effects on Agency policy?

These areas of focus represent different tests of effectiveness and provide a tiered set of standards for assessing NACEPT’s performance over the last 10 years. The methodology described below reflects the need to collect data on NACEPT related to each of these four areas of focus.

To investigate these questions, the Study team adopted a two-prong approach: (1) to reach as many past and present NACEPT participants as possible; and (2) to interview a representative sample of Agency officials. In this manner, the Study was intended to gather data on both the way in which NACEPT functions internally as well as how it is perceived by and impacts Agency decision-makers.

A three-stage process was developed to conduct the Study:

- Stage 1:** NACEPT and OCEM records and other external data sources (i.e., Internet) were reviewed to document and chronicle the activities of NACEPT;
- Stage 2:** Past and current NACEPT members were surveyed to gather participants' views of the quality of the NACEPT experience and standing committee effectiveness; and
- Stage 3:** Selected survey respondents and Agency officials were interviewed to validate the survey data and to gather additional data on NACEPT's impacts.

Stage 1: Review of Relevant Documentary Records and Reports

NACEPT operates through a central management council and standing committees established to provide advice to the Agency on specific topics. Over its 10-year history, 26 such standing committees have been constituted. The first step in the Study was to document the various activities of these standing committees and identify addresses for their members. This research effort included the review of OCEM, NACEPT, and other EPA records, and Internet research to identify the charge, activities, recommendations, and impacts (where directly attributed to a committee) of each standing committee. For each, a briefing paper was developed for providing a short explanation of why the standing committee was established, a summary of its charge, a review of its activities, and a listing of its reports and recommendations. These briefing papers aided the Study team in developing the survey questionnaire and were included in the survey mailing to provide respondents with a contextual reminder of the standing committee's purpose, activities, and recommendations. (Based on information gathered during the Study, these briefing papers have been updated and further developed to include the impacts of standing committee recommendations on the Agency.) The briefing papers are collected in a report entitled, *NACEPT: Chronology and History Report*.

Stage 2: Study Survey

680 written surveys were sent to past and present NACEPT members to evaluate their standing committee experiences. The survey consisted of 44 closed-ended questions (Likert-scale and multiple choice); five open-ended narrative questions; and five demographic questions (gender, race/ethnicity, age, sector represented, and number of standing committees on which the respondent served). Questions were organized in four sections:

- ▶ committee charge, processes, & procedures;
- ▶ committee recommendations and advice;
- ▶ impact of committee recommendations and advice; and
- ▶ overall assessment of standing committee and NACEPT experience.

At the end of each survey, respondents were asked to indicate their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview. The study, therefore, relied heavily on the opinions of past and current NACEPT members, who may be viewed as potentially bias sources of information. However, since NACEPT members do not receive compensation for their services and many past members no longer have immediate contact or professional relationships with EPA, the Study team believed that the risk of such bias was modest and could be qualitatively evaluated by comparing the views expressed to the historical record. For example, opinions related to NACEPT's impact on specific program and activities could be verified through the interviews with Agency officials described below and information publicly available about EPA programs. In addition, because a major focus of the study was to identify improvement in NACEPT's operations, past and current members were viewed as the most informed sources on the processes and procedures followed by the Council and its standing committees and their effectiveness.

Stage 3: Study Interviews

To corroborate the findings of the survey and gather additional information, interviews were conducted with a selected sample of survey respondents, Agency officials, and OCEM staff. To ensure that these interviews gathered information representative of the variety of NACEPT standing committee experiences, a subset of six standing committees representing a range of subject areas and survey response averages was selected by the NACEPT Study team for these in-depth, follow-up interviews. These six standing committees were:

- ▶ Total Maximum Daily Load Committee;
- ▶ Effluent Guidelines Task Force;
- ▶ Reinvention Criteria Committee;
- ▶ Toxic Data Reporting Committee;
- ▶ State and Local Programs Committee; and
- ▶ Information Impacts Committee.

Interviews were conducted by an independent survey firm via telephone and in person and covered the same topics as the Study survey with added focus on gathering supporting details and suggestions for improving future NACEPT efforts. For each standing committee, multiple interviews were conducted to promote a balanced and comprehensive set of perspectives.

Timeline and Key Activities

| | |
|------------------|--|
| April | Kick-off meeting at NACEPT plenary session |
| May | Researching and drafting of the standing committee briefing papers Development of the study methodology |
| June | First Study team meeting |
| July | Development of draft survey and sample Revisions to the standing committee briefing papers |
| August | Second Study team meeting |
| September | Survey in the field Development of interview protocols |
| October | Analysis of survey data |
| November | Third Study team meeting Interviews conducted |
| December | Interviews conducted Presentation of preliminary results to NACEPT Council |

Appendix G — Technical Details of Survey Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of the survey was to gather the views and opinions of as many past and current NACEPT members as possible on their NACEPT experience. Specifically, the survey:

- ▶ asked their assessment of the quality of their experience participating on NACEPT;
- ▶ solicited their opinion of the effectiveness of NACEPT; and
- ▶ determined their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview.

Approach

The survey was sent to all past and current NACEPT members for whom reliable current mailing address information was obtained. The survey was sent to NACEPT members rather than external stakeholders and EPA for several reasons:

- ▶ Outside stakeholders are unlikely to offer valuable information on how standing committees conduct their business.
- ▶ Limiting the survey to members allowed all past and present members to be surveyed, improving the quality and breadth of information gathered.
- ▶ It was expected that external stakeholders and EPA officials were less likely than past members to complete the survey since those with direct personal involvement with an organization are generally more likely to complete surveys about that organization. This consideration was significant since the survey addressed the work of NACEPT committees that existed as far back as 10 years.

Instrument

The survey was administered as a written questionnaire. It consisted of 44 multiple choice Likert-scale questions and five open-ended narrative questions. The format of the instrument provided boxes in which the respondent could mark their response to close-ended questions. Text boxes were provided for replies to open-ended questions. Instructions for completing and returning the survey were included at the beginning of and throughout the survey. Overall, it was estimated that completion of the survey would take approximately 20 minutes.

In addition, the survey asked five demographic questions. Instructions encouraged respondents

to answer these questions, but made it clear that responses to gender, race/ethnicity, and age questions were optional. All respondents had the option of completing the survey anonymously.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate if they were willing to participate in a follow-up interview, and if so, to provide pertinent contact information.

Survey Pre-Test

The draft survey form and instructions were pre-tested by the NACEPT Study team, OCEM, and the survey contractor to ensure that instructions and questions were clear, logically organized, and unambiguous.

Survey Distribution and Follow-up

The survey was distributed by U.S. Express Mail to emphasize its importance and to ensure that it “stood out” from other mail. Each survey package included:

- ▶ a cover letter from the NACEPT chairperson explaining the purpose of the study;
- ▶ background material about NACEPT, FACA, and the standing committee on which the individual participated [For respondents who served on multiple standing committees, multiple chronology reports and survey forms were provided to allow completion of one survey for each standing committee];
- ▶ the written survey pre-coded to indicate the committee in question; and
- ▶ a pre-addressed postage-paid return envelope. [Note: Instructions were also provided for return of completed surveys by fax.]

A follow-up postcard was sent approximately one week after the survey distribution, reminding the recipient of the survey and encouraging the recipient to complete and return the survey. Follow-up telephone calls were also made selectively to encourage survey response for those committees with low response rates.

Appendix H — Survey Instrument

National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology Membership Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather feedback from current and past NACEPT committee members to support NACEPT's self-assessment of its accomplishments and progress during its first ten years. The data from this survey will complement information collected from other sources and will help to assess the efficiency of NACEPT's internal processes as well as the impact of its committees. Together, these data will be used to identify opportunities for improving the overall effectiveness of NACEPT's internal processes and stakeholder service.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ▶ Please complete the attached survey for the Committee noted at the top of the next page (page 1). In answering the questions, please consider your personal experience on that *specific* Committee and mark (with an "X") the response which best indicates your view.
- ▶ Most questions use a standard response set: *Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree nor Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree; Do Not Know; and Not Applicable.*

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Do Not Recall | Do Not Know | Not Applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*If you sometimes agree
and sometimes
disagree in roughly
equal proportion, mark
"Neither Agree nor
Disagree."*

- ▶ Questions 18, 27, 35, 36, and 41 ask for narrative responses. Please write your response in the space provided. If you require additional space, you may continue on the back side of the page.
- ▶ The survey is ANONYMOUS if you prefer. Both survey and interview data will be collected and processed by a non-federal contractor. Results will be presented in cumulative statistics to ensure the anonymity of individual respondents.
- ▶ If you are willing to participate in a follow-up interview about your NACEPT experience, please provide your name and contact information at the end of the survey. Participation in the follow-up interviews is strictly voluntary.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In which of the following sectors did you work when appointed to this Committee?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal, State, or Local Government Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> College/University or other Academic Research Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate, Private, or Self-Employed | <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy or Public Interest Non-Governmental Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union or Labor Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional or Trade Association | |

On how many NACEPT Committees have you served?

- ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 or more

Which of the following best characterizes your attendance at Committee meetings?

- ☐ Never attended ☐ Attended less than half ☐ Attended about half ☐ Attended more than half ☐ Always attended

How would you characterize your experience serving on *this* Committee?

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Worth my time and effort | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not</i> worth my time and effort | |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> Committee's work had a noticeable effect on Agency decision-making. | <input type="checkbox"/> Committee <i>did not</i> have a noticeable effect on Agency decision-making. | <input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Know |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> In hindsight, I would serve on the same Committee again. | <input type="checkbox"/> In hindsight, I <i>would not</i> serve on the same Committee again. | |

How would you characterize NACEPT? (Please answer each part)

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> An <i>effective</i> means for the Agency to collect advice | <input type="checkbox"/> An <i>ineffective</i> means for the Agency to collect advice |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> An <i>efficient</i> means for the Agency to collect advice | <input type="checkbox"/> An <i>inefficient</i> means for the Agency to collect advice |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> I would serve on NACEPT again. | <input type="checkbox"/> I <i>would not</i> serve on NACEPT again. |

Please provide your assessment about the contribution of NACEPT to EPA on:

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion |
| b. Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion |
| c. Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion |
| d. Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion |

Note:

- "Committee" refers to the Committee identified at the top of page 1.
- "Council" refers to NACETT or NACEPT.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Do Not Recall | Do Not Know | Not Applicable |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| COMMITTEE CHARGE, PROCESSES, & PROCEDURES | | | | | | | | |
| 1. The Committee was provided with adequate direction on its purpose and goals. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. The Committee understood its purpose. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. The Committee membership was balanced in terms of the points of view represented. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. The Committee was able to determine its own direction and lines of inquiry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. As a Committee member, I had access to the information that I needed to make an informed decision on the issues. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. When I contacted the EPA program office or Office of Cooperative Environmental Management to request background information or other support, the support I received was: | | | | | | | | |
| a. timely | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. useful | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. thorough | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. There was a productive dialogue between appropriate Agency managers and the Committee. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Communication <i>among</i> Committee members was effective. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Differing opinions within the Committee were considered during Committee discussions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Communication <i>between the Committee and the Council</i> was effective. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. The frequency and schedule of meetings was sufficient for the Committee to achieve its purpose. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Sufficient notice of meeting times and locations was given to Committee members to allow adequate preparation for the meetings. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Background materials (e.g., agendas, issue papers) were effective in helping me to prepare for the meeting. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Meetings were well-planned and structured to achieve the Committee's goals. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Travel authorization and vouchers were received in a timely manner and met my needs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Note:

- ▶ "Committee" refers to the Committee identified at the top of page 1.
- ▶ "Council" refers to NACETT or NACEPT.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Do Not Recall | Do Not Know | Not Applicable |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 16. The Committee had adequate time to address all relevant issues. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. The Committee's recommendations or advice were developed in a timely manner. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. What improvements in process would have enhanced the Committee's productivity? | | | | | | | | |

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 19. The recommendations or advice developed by the Committee were clear and specific. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. The recommendations or advice that the Committee provided fulfilled the Committee's purpose/charge. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. In developing its recommendations or advice, the Committee discussed the practicality of implementation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. The Committee prioritized recommendations or advice in order of importance for implementation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. The recommendations or advice developed by the Committee were: <input type="checkbox"/> Overly detailed <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate in detail <input type="checkbox"/> Too vague | | | | | | | | |
| 24. In its reports, the Committee provided sufficient documentation of the basis for its recommendations or advice. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. The Committee's report(s) of its recommendations or advice were presented in a clear, easily understood format. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. The Committee received feedback from EPA on the Agency's decisions related to the Committee's recommendations or advice. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. What additional support or resources would have been valuable to the Committee in developing its recommendations or advice? | | | | | | | | |

IMPACT OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 28. The Committee's recommendations or advice introduced <i>new perspectives</i> to the Agency's consideration of the issues. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. The recommendations or advice offered by this Committee <i>addressed</i> Agency decision-makers' needs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. The recommendations or advice offered by this Committee <i>were timely</i> to Agency decision-makers' needs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Note:

- ▶ "Committee" refers to the Committee identified at the top of page 1.
- ▶ "Council" refers to NACETT or NACEPT.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Do Not Recall | Do Not Know | Not Applicable |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 31. I believe that the Agency has taken action <i>consistent with the Committee's recommendations or advice</i> . | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32. I believe that the Agency has taken action <i>as a direct result of the Committee's recommendations or advice</i> . | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 33. Based on the Agency's consideration and use of this Committee's recommendations or advice, <i>this Committee</i> provided a positive and worthwhile contribution to Agency decision-making. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34. I believe this Committee's recommendations or advice had an influence beyond the Agency's decision-making process (e.g., at the state and local level). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35. Please characterize your assessment of the impact of <i>this Committee's</i> recommendations and advice on the Agency's decision-making and actions. <div style="text-align: right;">(Continue on back if necessary)</div> | | | | | | | | |
| 36. What did you value most about your participation on <i>this Committee</i> ? <div style="text-align: right;">Continue on back if necessary)</div> | | | | | | | | |

ASSESSMENT OF NACEPT

Note: The following questions ask for your assessment of **NACETT/NACEPT** as whole (i.e., not limited to your experience on this Committee).

If you have answered this section on a previous Committee survey, you need not complete this section again — please check this box ☐

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 37. NACEPT is an effective way for EPA to collect stakeholder input for the Agency's decision-making process. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 38. NACEPT provides EPA decision-makers with valuable input from a broad range of interested parties. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 39. NACEPT provides timely input to EPA to identify and address key issues and challenges facing the Agency. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 40. As a result of my participation on NACEPT, I have become involved in other Agency decision-making processes. <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable </div> | | | | | | | | |
| 41. Please use this space to share with the Study team any other comments about this Committee or NACEPT. <div style="text-align: right;">(Continue on back if necessary)</div> | | | | | | | | |

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (OPTIONAL)

- A. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
- B. Race/Ethnicity: ☐ Native American/Alaskan Native
☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ Caucasian (White), non-Hispanic
☐ Hispanic
☐ African American
☐ Other _____
- C. Age at time of Committee membership: ☐ 35 years old or younger
☐ 36-45 years old
☐ 46-55 years old
☐ 56-65 years old
☐ 66 years old or older

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW (VOLUNTARY)

As part of the NACEPT 10-Year Anniversary Study, case studies of selected committees will be developed to further examine the impact of NACEPT on Agency policy, management, outreach, and technology as well as to identify opportunities for improving the operations and influence of NACEPT and its committees. As part of these case studies, in-depth interviews (approximately 30 minutes in length) will be conducted over the next two months with NACEPT members, Designated Federal Officers, EPA senior managers, staff from relevant EPA program offices, and external stakeholders. If you are willing to be interviewed as part of these case studies, please indicate so below.

Appendix I — Study Survey Background Materials

Background materials on relevant points of FACA legislation, NACETT/NACEPT history, and the history of the specific committees on which the respondent served were included in the survey mailing to refresh respondent's recollection of their NACEPT experience. All respondents received the same FACA and NACETT/NACEPT history background as provided below. In addition, the respondent received only the committee report(s) on which the he/she served. All committee reports followed the same format and the report for the IRM Task Force is included here as an example.

Key Points of the Federal Advisory Committee Act

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) was passed by Congress in 1972. It provides for a larger citizen voice in the affairs of the Federal Government through invited committee member and open public participation in advisory groups. These groups are frequently a useful and beneficial means of providing expert advice, ideas, and diverse opinions to the federal government.

FACA requires that such citizen advisory groups be:

- chartered;
- balanced and diverse in terms of perspective, professional qualifications, and experience; and
- established when "determined to be essential" and disestablished upon completion of work.

Further, the business of these groups is to be:

- announced in the Federal Register prior to the meeting;
- open to public attendance and written and/or oral comment as agency guidelines permit; and
- conducted promptly.

NACETT/NACEPT Background

In 1988, EPA established the National Council for Environmental Technology Transfer (NACETT) to provide advice and counsel to the Administrator on technology transfer issues associated with the management of environmental problems. As the Council evolved, NACETT's role expanded beyond the initial technology transfer charge to a broader environmental policy formulation. As a result, the Council was renamed the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) in September, 1990. Celebrating its 10-year anniversary, NACEPT has experienced the following evolution in focus:

- 1988** NACETT established to provide advice and counsel on environmental technology transfer issues.
- 1990** NACETT renamed to NACEPT to address broader environmental policy issues and shifted its primary focus to address cross-cutting major issues related to trade and the environment and pollution prevention.
- 1994** NACEPT's charter is expanded again addressing new areas such as environmental technology development and transfer, ecosystems management and environmental sustainability, community empowerment, global environmental management, non-federal resources directed at solving environmental economic problems, benefits of technology transfer, and alternative approaches to environmental protection.
- Today** NACEPT's mission is to help EPA to improve implementation of environmental programs by fostering more effective use of the resources of all public and private institutions involved in environmental management.

NACEPT is organized into three interactive committee structures:

- ***Standing Committees*** are the primary operating units for NACEPT, created and charged to address specific issues and concerns related to environmental policy and technology.
- The ***Executive Committee***, comprised of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council as well as the Chair and Co-Chair of each standing committee, provides for overall planning for the Council and for coordinating activity among committees.
- The ***Council*** operates as a steering committee, coordinating, overseeing, and reviewing the work of all standing committees. It is the Council's responsibility to present recommendations from NACEPT to the EPA Administrator and Deputy Administrator.

The **Office of Cooperative Environmental Management (OCEM)** is responsible for the management and oversight of NACEPT. In addition, a few NACEPT standing committees are managed by EPA program offices under the oversight of OCEM.

Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Planning Task Force

1994

- ★ Established to provide expert input on how to prioritize the Agency's information resource management budget in support of the Agency's strategic vision, the integration of information, and working relationships with external partners.
- ★ Worked closely with EPA's Office of Information Resources Management to conduct an intense six-month study of key IRM strategic issues.
- ★ Published one report:
 - "Using Information Strategically to Protect Human Health and the Environment: Recommendations for Comprehensive Information Resources Management: Report of the IRM Strategic Planning Task Force" (August 1994).

A. Why Established

Integrated information provides the basis for a better understanding of environmental issues and is a key enabler for comprehensive approaches to environmental protection. Over the past several years, EPA has been implementing more comprehensive approaches for protecting human health and the environment (e.g., ecosystem protection, environmental justice). These approaches, in turn, require a new integrated approach to managing EPA's information resources.

Specifically, the Agency was interested in receiving input on how to prioritize its budget for information resource management (IRM). As a result, the Information Resources Management Strategic Task Force was established to gather such input.

B. Description of Charge

The Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Planning Task Force was charged with providing recommendations on the key IRM strategic issues and IRM capabilities required by the Agency. The Task Force was asked to focus particularly on how to prioritize the Agency's IRM budget in support of the Agency's strategic vision, the integration of information, and improving the working relationships with external partners.

C. Membership, Dates of Activity, and Mode of Operation

The Task Force included members from five states, one local government, three public and environmental interest groups, two Federal agencies, and one academic institution. The Task Force was created in January 1994 and held its seven meetings during its one-year existence.

The standing committee's Designated Federal Official (DFO) worked very closely with EPA's Office of Information Resources Management (OIRM) to delineate the issues that the standing committee would consider. The standing committee spent six months studying key IRM strategic issues and then focused on developing its report. EPA staff worked closely with the standing committee throughout its active life to ensure regular and meaningful Agency-standing committee collaboration.

D. Recommendations and Reports

The Task Force published two reports: a set of interim recommendations (March 1994), and a set of final recommendations (August 1994). For the purposes of this report, only the final recommendations are presented because they so closely resembled the interim recommendations.

"Using Information Strategically to Protect Human Health and the Environment: Recommendations for Comprehensive Information Resources Management: Report of the IRM Strategic Planning Task Force," August 1994

In this report, the Task Force expressed its belief that the management of EPA's information resources must be aligned to support the mission of the Agency. EPA is in the midst of a profound shift from a media-by-media approach to a more comprehensive approach to protecting human health and the environment. This new comprehensive approach includes the following guiding principles:

- Ecosystem Protection;
- Environmental Justice;
- Pollution Prevention;
- Strong Science and Data;
- Partnerships;
- Reinventing EPA Management; and
- Environmental Accountability.

Implementing these principles will fundamentally alter the Agency's approach and require new thinking in many areas, including the management of its information resources. In addition, as the Agency realigns its strategic directions, it is also challenged by new legislative mandates and Executive Office directions, including the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), The National Performance Review (NPR), and the Pollution Prevention Act (PPA).

Ultimately, EPA's ability to fulfill its mission depends upon how it manages its resources, including information. EPA historically has managed its information resources in terms of its single-media programs, such as "Air" and "Water." This heritage has resulted in a fragmented approach to managing the Agency's information. In addition, many

programs do not have sufficient data to measure their progress toward achieving their programmatic goals, and EPA has not identified and does not collect adequate data to measure environmental quality or trends in environmental quality.

The Task Force concluded that the Agency's current approach to collection and management of information will not support the requirements of the GPRA, NPR, PPA, or the Agency's comprehensive approach to environmental protection, and that EPA will fail to implement its guiding principles unless it moves to a more comprehensive approach to managing the Agency's information resources.

Specifically, the Task Force made the following four recommendations in its report: *EPA Must Use Information Strategically to Achieve the Agency's Mission*. Information must be viewed and managed as a fundamental, corporate asset to move beyond the fragmented use of information resources. The Agency must realize that information provides the critical link to integrate programs, empower stakeholders to accurately identify, manage, and prevent environmental problems, and promote environmental successes. There are several elements to this recommendation, including:

- use information strategically to protect human health and the environment;
- manage information as an Agency asset; and
- manage information as an essential element of programs.

EPA Must Actively Use Information to Empower its Partners. Information is a powerful asset. It is one asset that all partners can share without depleting the asset, and which gains in value as it is used. These attributes make information a critical asset in partnership building. The establishment of information-based partnerships is one key way information can be used strategically to protect human health and the environment. Environmental issues can be better defined and more effectively addressed through partnerships with: local, state, tribal, and foreign governments; other Federal agencies; educational, environmental; and community-based organizations; industries; and individuals. There are several elements to this recommendation, including:

- aggressively provide information to the public on environmental issues; and
- aggressively pursue information-based partnerships with co-implementors and stakeholders.

EPA Must Establish an Integrated Information Infrastructure to Achieve a Comprehensive Approach to Environmental Protection.

Although EPA has begun to implement environmental initiatives in a manner that links and refocuses its traditional single-media programs, the Agency's investment in and use of its information infrastructure does not yet reflect or support this change. Instead, the existing infrastructure mirrors the Agency's traditional single-media approach. The infrastructure comprises a series of "stovepipe" information systems and databases that were designed solely to support specific media programs and not to exchange or link information across programs. An integrated information infrastructure with standardized, accurate information that spans the Agency's organizations and its partners is critical to implementation of EPA's guiding principles. There are several elements to this recommendation, including:

- develop, immediately implement, and enforce data standards;
- develop data integration policies and tools;
- define data requirements and identify gaps in the data inventory; and
- reduce the burden on providers of information.

EPA Must Establish a More Effective Organization for Information Resources Management. The Task Force found that EPA's existing information resources management structure is fragmented and does not provide sufficient authority to its senior IRM official to ensure that Agency information needs are met. An appropriate organizational structure must be created with authority and responsibility clearly aligned to manage the Agency's information resources. The management of EPA's information resources must be championed at a senior level and receive adequate attention from all senior managers. There must be a distinct budget for all IRM expenditures to ensure that information resource costs are accounted for like other corporate assets. Essentially, EPA must change the general culture of its IRM management. There are several elements to this recommendation, including:

- establish a Chief Information Officer (CIO) position with mission critical responsibilities;
- maintain an executive level IRM Steering Committee;
- integrate the IRM planning process with the Agency's budget;
- resolve the organizational fragmentation; and
- strengthen program IRM implementation efforts.

Appendix J — Survey Results

All percentages based on 198 respondents unless otherwise noted.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In which of the following sectors did you work when appointed to this Committee?

| | |
|-----|--|
| 29% | Federal, State, or Local Government Agency |
| 31% | Corporate, Private, or Self-Employed |
| 1% | Trade Union or Labor Organization |
| 7% | Professional or Trade Association |
| 17% | College/University or other Academic Research Organization |
| 8% | Advocacy or Public Interest Non-Governmental Organization |
| 5% | Other |
| 2% | Skipped |

On how many NACEPT Committees have you served?

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|---|----|---|----|---|----|-----------|----|---------|
| 60% | 1 | 22% | 2 | 8% | 3 | 6% | 4 | 0% | 5 or more | 4% | Skipped |
|-----|---|-----|---|----|---|----|---|----|-----------|----|---------|

Gender:

| | | | | | |
|-----|------|-----|--------|----|---------|
| 65% | Male | 26% | Female | 9% | Skipped |
|-----|------|-----|--------|----|---------|

Race/Ethnicity:

| | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| 3% | Native American/Alaskan Native | 3% | Asian or Pacific Islander |
| 77% | Caucasian (White), non-Hispanic | 1% | Hispanic |
| 5% | African American | 1% | Other |
| | | 10% | Skipped |

Age at time of Committee membership:

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| 6% | 35 years old or younger | 13% | 56-65 years old |
| 33% | 36-45 years old | 1% | 66 years old or older |
| 39% | 46-55 years old | | |

Which of the following best characterizes your attendance at Committee meetings?

| | | | |
|----|-------------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| 1% | Never attended | 33% | Attended more than half |
| 1% | Attended less than half | 61% | Always attended |
| 4% | Attended about half | 1% | Skipped |

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF COMMITTEE AND NACEPT EXPERIENCE

1. How would you characterize your experience serving on *this Committee*?

- a. 77% Worth my time and effort
16% *Not* worth my time and effort
7% Skipped
- b. 37% Committee's work had a noticeable effect on Agency decision-making.
29% Committee *did not* have a noticeable effect on Agency decision-making.
29% Do Not Know
5% Skipped
- c. 75% In hindsight, I would serve on the same Committee again.
16% In hindsight, I *would not* serve on the same Committee again.
9% Skipped

3. How would you characterize NACEPT?

- a. 77% An *effective* means for the Agency to collect advice.
14% An *ineffective* means for the Agency to collect advice.
7% Skipped
- b. 62% An *efficient* means for the Agency to collect advice.
23% An *inefficient* means for the Agency to collect advice.
14% Skipped
- c. 77% I would serve on NACEPT again.
12% I *would not* serve on NACEPT again.
11% Skipped

4. Please provide your assessment about the contribution of NACEPT to EPA

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|---------|
| a. Policy | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion | Skipped |
| | 14% | 38% | 23% | 8% | 10% | 7% |
| b. Management | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion | Skipped |
| | 8% | 26% | 29% | 13% | 19% | 6% |
| c. Outreach | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion | Skipped |
| | 14% | 38% | 23% | 9% | 11% | 6% |
| d. Technology | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion | Skipped |
| | 10% | 24% | 21% | 16% | 23% | 6% |

SA= Strongly Agree
A = Agree
NA/ND = Neither Agree nor Disagree
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree
DNR = Do Not Recall
DNK = Do Not Know
NA = Not Applicable
S = Skipped
T = Total

| | SA | A | NA/ ND | D | SD | D N R | D N K | NA | S | T |
|---|-----|-----|-----------|-----|----|-------------|-------------|-----|----|-----|
| COMMITTEE CHARGE, PROCESSES, & PROCEDURES | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. The Committee was provided with adequate direction on its purpose and goals. | 15% | 49% | 16% | 13% | 4% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 2% | 198 |
| 2. The Committee understood its purpose. | 14% | 47% | 17% | 16% | 3% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 2% | 198 |
| 3. The Committee membership was balanced in terms of the points of view represented. | 19% | 57% | 8% | 12% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 2% | 198 |
| 4. The Committee was able to determine its own direction and lines of inquiry. | 15% | 48% | 14% | 12% | 9% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 198 |
| 5. As a Committee member, I had access to the information that I needed to make an informed decision on the issues. | 21% | 46% | 16% | 10% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 198 |
| 6. When I contacted the EPA program office or Office of Cooperative Environmental Management to request background information or other support, the support I received was: a. timely b. useful c. thorough | 21% | 43% | 5% | 5% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 18% | 2% | 198 |
| | 17% | 40% | 13% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 18% | 2% | 198 |
| | 16% | 34% | 17% | 5% | 3% | 2% | 3% | 18% | 2% | 198 |
| 7. There was a productive dialogue between appropriate Agency managers and the Committee. | 27% | 40% | 13% | 12% | 4% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 198 |
| 8. Communication <i>among</i> Committee members was effective. | 19% | 52% | 15% | 10% | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 198 |
| 9. Differing opinions within the Committee were considered during Committee discussions. | 30% | 59% | 6% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 198 |
| 10. Communication <i>between the Committee and the Council</i> was effective. | 7% | 24% | 22% | 12% | 6% | 2% | 22% | 4% | 2% | 198 |
| 11. The frequency and schedule of meetings was sufficient for the Committee to achieve its purpose. | 10% | 51% | 16% | 15% | 5% | 0% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 198 |
| 12. Sufficient notice of meeting times and locations was given to Committee members to allow adequate preparation for the meetings. | 22% | 55% | 9% | 10% | 2% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 198 |

| | SA | A | NA/ ND | D | SD | D N R | D N K | NA | S | T |
|--|---|-----|-----------|-----|-----|-------------|-------------|-----|----|-----|
| 13. Background materials (e.g., agendas, issue papers) were effective in helping me to prepare for the meeting. | 17% | 51% | 15% | 13% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 2% | 198 |
| 14. Meetings were well-planned and structured to achieve the Committee's goals. | 18% | 37% | 20% | 15% | 8% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 198 |
| 15. Travel authorization and vouchers were received in a timely manner and met my needs. | 18% | 39% | 8% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 26% | 2% | 198 |
| 16. The Committee had adequate time to address all relevant issues. | 8% | 33% | 23% | 24% | 9% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 198 |
| 17. The Committee's recommendations or advice were developed in a timely manner. | 10% | 42% | 20% | 17% | 5% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 198 |
| 18. Narrative Response | | | | | | | | | | |
| COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19. The recommendations or advice developed by the Committee were clear and specific. | 10% | 42% | 22% | 13% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 5% | 3% | 198 |
| 20. The recommendations or advice that the Committee provided fulfilled the Committee's purpose/charge. | 12% | 40% | 19% | 12% | 3% | 1% | 7% | 4% | 3% | 198 |
| 21. In developing its recommendations or advice, the Committee discussed the practicality of implementation. | 12% | 46% | 16% | 13% | 1% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 4% | 198 |
| 22. The Committee prioritized recommendations or advice in order of importance for implementation. | 8% | 29% | 23% | 16% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 7% | 3% | 198 |
| 23. The recommendations or advice developed by the Committee were: | 3% Overly detailed 59% Appropriate in detail 23% Too vague 16% Skipped | | | | | | | | | 198 |
| 24. In its reports, the Committee provided sufficient documentation of the basis for its recommendations or advice. | 8% | 35% | 24% | 12% | 3% | 2% | 7% | 7% | 3% | 198 |
| 25. The Committee's report(s) of its recommendations or advice were presented in a clear, easily understood format. | 12% | 42% | 20% | 9% | 2% | 2% | 5% | 6% | 4% | 198 |
| 26. The Committee received feedback from EPA on the Agency's decisions related to the Committee's recommendations or advice. | 5% | 22% | 22% | 17% | 13% | 2% | 8% | 8% | 3% | 198 |

| SA | A | NA/ ND | D | SD | D N R | D N K | NA | S | T |
|----|---|-----------|---|----|-------------|-------------|----|---|---|
|----|---|-----------|---|----|-------------|-------------|----|---|---|

IMPACT OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE

27. Narrative Responses

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 28. The Committee's recommendations or advice introduced <i>new perspectives</i> to the Agency's consideration of the issues. | 10% | 47% | 14% | 10% | 4% | 3% | 7% | 4% | 3% | 198 |
| 29. The recommendations or advice offered by this Committee <i>addressed</i> Agency decision-makers' needs. | 11% | 40% | 21% | 5% | 3% | 2% | 11% | 5% | 3% | 198 |
| 30. The recommendations or advice offered by this Committee <i>were timely</i> to Agency decision-makers' needs. | 12% | 42% | 19% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 10% | 4% | 4% | 198 |
| 31. I believe that the Agency has taken action <i>consistent with</i> the Committee's recommendations or advice. | 3% | 22% | 22% | 12% | 10% | 1% | 23% | 7% | 2% | 198 |
| 32. I believe that the Agency has taken action <i>as a direct result of</i> the Committee's recommendations or advice. | 5% | 22% | 22% | 10% | 10% | 0% | 24% | 7% | 2% | 198 |
| 33. Based on the Agency's consideration and use of this Committee's recommendations or advice, <i>this Committee</i> provided a positive and worthwhile contribution to Agency decision-making. | 7% | 32% | 17% | 10% | 8% | 0% | 20% | 5% | 2% | 198 |
| 34. I believe this Committee's recommendations or advice had an influence beyond the Agency's decision-making process (e.g., at the state and local level). | 6% | 24% | 19% | 12% | 6% | 1% | 22% | 7% | 5% | 198 |

35. Narrative response

ASSESSMENT OF NACEPT

Note: The following questions ask for your assessment of NACETT/NACEPT as whole (i.e., not limited to your experience on this Committee). 34 surveys did not have responses for any questions in this section as the respondents had completed this portion of the survey on another survey.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|-----|----|--|-----|
| 36. NACEPT is an effective way for EPA to collect stakeholder input for the Agency's decision-making process. | 15% | 52% | 16% | 9% | 3% | 0% | 4% | 0% | | 164 |
| 37. NACEPT provides EPA decision-makers with valuable input from a broad range of interested parties. | 23% | 53% | 8% | 7% | 2% | 0% | 7% | 0% | | 163 |
| 38. NACEPT provides timely input to EPA to identify and address key issues and challenges facing the Agency. | 17% | 46% | 16% | 9% | 2% | 0% | 10% | 0% | | 163 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| <p>39. As a result of my participation on NACEPT, I have become involved in other Agency decision-making processes.</p> <p>25% Yes 49% No 25% Not Applicable</p> | 157 |
|--|-----|

Follow-up Interview

58% Yes, I am willing to be interviewed by telephone to discuss my experience with NACEPT.

42% Other

Appendix K — Technical Details of the Interview Methodology

Purpose

As part of this study, interviews were conducted with four groups:

- NACEPT members;
- Agency officials involved with specific standing committees;
- Past and current Directors of the Office of Cooperative Environmental Management; and
- External stakeholders

Interviews with NACEPT members and Agency officials focused on specific standing committee activities and results. Interviews with the Directors of OCEM were intended to provide context on changes in NACEPT's organization and procedures, as well as changes in EPA's support to the Council, such as internal management improvement efforts. Interviews with external stakeholders were intended to provide an outside perspective on the effectiveness of the advisory process and the influence of NACEPT beyond EPA.

The purpose of the interview phase was to validate and enrich the survey results and to gather additional information. Interviews were conducted with a sample of survey respondents and officials from select Agency offices.¹ Interviews offer greater flexibility than surveys to pursue issues specific to the respondent's experience including issues not addressed in a written survey. In addition, interviews allow for detailed follow-up to questions which is particularly relevant to a study such as this, which seeks not just to identify issues but also recommendations for change. In this way, interviews can both confirm and expand the data collected through the survey.

Interview Selection Process and Mix

A sampling plan was developed for the interview phase. Due to the variety of experience among the numerous standing committees, the sampling plan identified a sub-set of standing committees for which a series of interviews would take place. (Selecting a limited number of standing committees for follow-up interviews allowed interviews to be conducted with a greater number standing committee members thus providing a more representative set of perspectives on that standing committee.) Six standing committees were selected to provide a range of experiences based on the following specific criteria:

¹ A small number of interviews were also conducted with external stakeholders. Because of the difficulty in securing the participation of relevant external stakeholders, methodological concerns about representativeness, and the lack of new information gathered, these interviews were not included in the final data set and did not meaningfully contribute to the findings of this study.

- ▶ topic area of the standing committee (information management /information technology, general agency policy or management, program or media-specific);
- ▶ average response scores on the written survey (most positive, average, and least positive); and
- ▶ a response rate to the written survey greater than 40%.

Specific interviewees were selected based on their indicated willingness to be interviewed (from the written survey) and on their individual survey responses (ranging from negative to positive) to capture a fair and complete set of opinions.² Relevant external stakeholders and Agency officials were identified from standing committee records such as meeting participant lists and those judged most knowledgeable about the workings and results of the committee were selected. In addition, three past and the current director of OCEM were interviewed to provide additional content on changes in EPA and OCEM policy toward initiating and supporting committees.

Interview Protocol

An interview protocol was developed to ensure that all interviews would be conducted in a standard way. Based on topics for investigation provided by the Study team, the survey contractor developed a list of potential questions to be used throughout the Study interviews (see Appendix L).

Using the survey results, a customized interview script was developed. This script included selected of interview questions based upon the interviewee's survey responses. (For Agency staff interviewees, standing committee background documents were sent in advance of the interview. These reports were similar to the report presented in Appendix I.) In addition, interviewers raised ad hoc questions to clarify responses to pre-selected interview questions. Interviews were conducted by phone and in-person and lasted approximately 30 minutes. All interview information was kept anonymous to the Study team by the contractor to promote candor.

Interview Data Analysis

To promote objectivity in the analysis of the interview data, each interviewer drafted a summary of key points immediately after the interview (while the conversation was fresh in his or her mind). A second analyst reviewed the interview notes and interview summary to ensure consistency and completeness of the summary.

² This approach posed potential concerns that voluntary self-identification for follow-up interviews might result only in the most positive committee members being interviewed. Comparison of those willing to be interviewed and those not did not, however, show significant differences in overall views regarding NACEPT.

Appendix L — Interview Questions

Note: The following is a list of the questions used to prepare the scripts for the interviews of NACEPT members. Since each script was customized based on the interviewee's survey responses, not all questions were asked of all interviewees. Consequently, some of the questions in this list assume that the interviewee holds a specific opinion on the question topic. Such questions were only asked as a follow-up to the interviewee's survey response. For that purpose, the survey question to which each interview question in this list is denoted below in parenthesis following the question. Additional questions may have been asked at the discretion of the interviewer based on issues raised in the interview.

Interview questions for Agency officials involved with specific standing committees were drawn from a similar list, which more narrowly focused on the products and impact of the standing committees. These questions primarily addressed the nature, specificity, timeliness, and relevance of the standing committees' recommendation, as well as the value of dialogue with the committee during its deliberations. In addition, these Agency officials were asked about the subsequent effect of the recommendations on Agency actions, including specific examples of Agency decisions and policies influenced by NACEPT.

Interview questions addressed to the past and current Directors of OCEM focused on changes in the operations and focus of NACEPT over time, as well as changes in OCEM's support to NACEPT and its standing committees. These interviews provided additional context to understand the composition and internal operations of NACEPT as it evolved over the last 10 years.

Standing Committee Charge, Processes, and Procedures

In what way did the standing committee lack direction on its purpose and goals? (1)

Why did the standing committee not understand its purpose? What should have been done to help foster such an understanding? (2)

Were there any groups or views not represented on the standing committee that you would have expected or thought should have been? (3)

How could the standing committee membership have been better balanced in terms of the points of view represented? (3)

How did the standing committee decide its own direction and line of inquiry? Was the standing committee encouraged to do so? (4)

What factors impeded the standing committee's ability to determine its own direction/lines of inquiry? (4)

How would you characterize the information made available to you as a standing committee member -- too little/too much? Well organized? Concise? Overly technical? (5)

Why did you find OCEM support to be less than thorough/timely/useful? Can you provide examples? What could have been done differently? (6c)

How much contact did you have with EPA program offices? With OCEM? With the Council? Were these groups responsive to your needs and requests? (6-7)

Would you characterize the standing committee's interactions with EPA program office staff: as primarily with technical EPA staff, or senior managers with decision-making authority? (7)

What aspects of communication among standing committee members were ineffective? What could have been done to improve communications? (8)

Would the standing committee's work have benefitted from greater opportunity for communication among members outside of official meetings, such as conference calls or group e-mails? Do you think that most standing committee members would have used such opportunities if available? (8)

What was the amount and nature of communication between the standing committee and the Council? (10)

Would more communication with the Council have been helpful to the standing committee in completing its work? (10)

Why do you characterize the communication between the standing committee and the Council as ineffective? What could have been done to improve communications? (10)

In hindsight, would you have recommended a different frequency of meetings for your standing committee? If so, how would the schedule of meetings have been different? (11)

How much notice of meeting times and locations would you consider sufficient to allow adequate preparation for the meetings? How much did you actually receive? (12)

How helpful were the background materials for the meetings? What would have made these materials more helpful to you? Do you think this was true for most of your standing committee members as well? (13)

How could standing committee meetings have been structured differently to help the standing committee better fulfill its charter? (14)

What aspects of the travel authorization/voucher process did not meet your needs? What could have been done differently? (15)

Did time constraints affect the quality or thoroughness of the standing committee's work? What would have been a more appropriate time frame for the standing committee to formulate and provide advice? What could the standing committee have achieved with more time? What additional resources or support would have been needed for the standing committee to have completed its work sooner? (16)

Do you think that other standing committee members shared your sentiments regarding the operation and function of your standing committee? (1-17)

Are there any recommendations to the Office of Cooperative Environmental Management that you would suggest to improve the operations of future NACEPT standing committees? (17)

If the chairperson of a newly established NACEPT standing committee called you to ask how he/she could ensure the success of his/her's standing committee's work, what advice would you give him or her?

Standing Committee Recommendations and Advice

What characteristics of the recommendations or advice provided by the standing committee led you to state that they did not fulfill the standing committee's charge? (20)

Did the standing committee's recommendations go beyond the standing committee's charter? If so, in what way? Did the standing committee do this purposely? (20)

What considerations, such as the practicality or specificity, did the standing committee focus on in developing its recommendations? Were there any considerations that were intentionally not considered? (19-23)

Why do you believe the standing committee's recommendations were overly detailed/too vague? What could have been done differently to have avoided this? (23)

How well documented was the basis for the standing committee's recommendations or advice? Did the standing committee believe that such documentation was not needed? (24)

Did you and the rest of the standing committee expect feedback on your recommendations and advice? What feedback did the standing committee receive from the Agency on its recommendations and advice? What was the form of this feedback (e.g., in a letter from the Administrator or Deputy Administrator, through the DFO)? When was this feedback received? (26)

In what form would you like the feedback regarding the impact of the standing committee's recommendations and advice on the Agency's decision-making and actions? How much? How frequently? How soon after the recommendations are provided? (26)

What specifically hindered the quality and timeliness of developing the recommendations and advice? (19-26)

How did your actual experience on this standing committee differ from your expectations?

Impact of the Standing Committee's Recommendations and Advice

Do you believe that your standing committee's recommendations and advice served to confirm or reaffirm the Agency's established positions, or did the advice provide new perspectives and directions? (28)

What could have been done to help the standing committee more effectively introduce new perspectives to the Agency's consideration of the issues? (28)

How could the standing committee have improved the quality of its recommendations? (29)

Why do you feel the standing committee's recommendations did/*did not* address the Agency decision-makers' needs? What should the recommendations have contained to better meet the Agency decision-makers' needs? (29)

Why do you believe the standing committee's recommendations were/*were not* timely to meet the Agency's needs? When should the recommendations have been submitted to meet the Agency's needs? (30)

Why do you believe that the Agency has/*has not* taken action **consistent with** the standing committee's recommendations? (31)

Why do you believe that the Agency has/*has not* taken action as a **direct result of** the standing committee's recommendations? (32)

What was the most significant contribution of the standing committee to EPA and why? (33)

Why do you believe that the standing committee's recommendations have had an influence beyond the Agency's decision-making process? Can you provide specific examples? (34)

Do you think that it would have been useful for your standing committee to have continued so that it could have monitored and provided advice on the implementation of its recommendations?

Assessment of NACEPT

In your opinion, why does EPA not always implement NACEPT's recommendations? (37-40)

Why do you think that NACEPT does not provide timely input to EPA to identify and address key issues and challenges facing the Agency? (39)

Why do you consider NACEPT an efficient/*inefficient* means for the Agency to collect advice? What changes to the process would improve NACEPT's efficiency? (3b)

Why would you not serve on NACEPT again? What would have to be different for you to reconsider? (3c - Overall Assessment)

How could NACEPT provide more value to the Agency? Specifically, what could NACEPT do differently to improve its contributions to issues related to EPA policy, management, outreach, and technology? (4a-d - Overall Assessment)

Questions for Agency Staff and External Stakeholders

How much interaction did you have with the standing committee? What was the nature of that interaction — made a presentation, provided technical expertise, attended meeting as an observer, addressed ad hoc inquiries, etc.?

Were you familiar with the standing committee's charge and charter? If yes, did the recommendations accomplish the goals and purpose of the standing committee?

Did the standing committee provide proper background information and documentation to substantiate the final recommendations?

Did the standing committee present the final recommendations in a format which facilitated understanding the recommendations and implementing them?

Did the recommendations specify who should implement them and by when?

How did *this standing committee's* recommendations and advice impact the Agency's decision-making and actions?

Has the Agency taken action *consistent with* the standing committee's recommendations or advice?

Has the Agency taken action *as a direct result of* the standing committee's recommendations or advice? Can you provide specific examples?

Based on your knowledge of the standing committee's recommendations or advice, do you think that *this standing committee* provided a positive and worthwhile contribution to Agency decision-making?

Did the standing committee's recommendations or advice have an influence beyond the Agency's decision-making process (e.g., at the state and local level)? Can you provide specific examples?

Did you provide any feedback directly to the standing committee regarding the recommendations or their implementation? If so, when? Did you provide any feedback directly to the Council regarding the recommendations or their implementation? If so, when?

Based on your experience, is NACEPT an effective way for EPA to collect stakeholder input for the Agency's decision-making process?

Based on your experience, does NACEPT provide timely input to EPA?

How can NACEPT provide more value to the Agency's decision-making process?

As a result of your experience with NACEPT, are there other topics or issues currently facing the Agency that might merit the attention of NACEPT?

Appendix M — Chronology and History Report

The NACEPT Chronology and History Report is available as a separate document.